

異世界食堂

Isekai Shokudo

2

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illustration

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The Other World Dining Hall

— Isekai Shokudou —

- Volume 2 -

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[fox's coffee time]

CHAPTER 21

FRIED RICE



Sunday.

For the owner, it was a day off every week.

He who was not married and had an easy life was usually focused on going to a restaurant or doing a culinary research in the shop as a hobby and a source of profit.

However, he unusually decided to spend it at the restaurant.

It was decided to train the new “employee” today.

She had never worked at a restaurant before.

So he had to teach her various things.

That’s why the owner’s first order was for her to clean herself.

After waiting for 1 hour,

[A, ano...I finished changing my clothes...]

The new employee showed herself.

The dress is a white apron with a black cat applique with a white blouse as a top and a knee length black flared skirt along with a white underwear that the owner bought quickly.

Completing the uniform were white socks and a pair of black shoes.

The black and white uniform was harmonized well with the slightly reddish dark golden hairs gathered in red hair tie.

A new employee. That figure was very pretty.

[How, how was it...?]

A small body with poor growth and thinness while wearing a different world style clothes, the employee... Aletta who was an otherworld demon tried to show the owner.

Her cheeks burned showing her embarrassment.

[Un, it's fine. Is the shoe size okay? Did you wash your body properly?]

He observed Aletta's appearance, judged it and nodded.

[Ha, hai! The shoes were perfect and I washed like the way you taught it.]

Tense, Aletta answered the owner's questions.

The owner said that in a restaurant, workers must keep their bodies clean.

If you brought sickness or dirt to the restaurant, it is unhygienic and would cause inconvenience to the restaurant and the customers.

And it was difficult for Aletta, who lived at the slums, to maintain her cleanliness.

First, Aletta had to learn how to wash her body.

Of course, it was normal to wash the body and Aletta... knew how to do so.

But this was a different world, a place where many mysterious magic were used.

It was explained, and it took a while to actually implement it.

How to use a small room called “shower room” with an equipment that rained warm water, and the different types of perfume oil used to wash the hair and the body.

(He said that it was necessary to rinse cleanly in hot water after washing the body.)

How to use the magic tool to dry her hair that was wet with warm rain water.

Aletta’s clothes which had been worn up to now were taken by saying that there was a magic tool to automatically wash anything.

It was said that the washing will be finished by the evening.

And during that time, Aletta clothed herself in the “uniform” for employees and was taught by the owner.

Thus, the training of Aletta, the first employee of otherworld dining hall, began.

[Well, I would like to ask you something... Aletta, do you know how to read?]

[E!?... Etto, that, I’m sorry...]

Aletta replied to the owner apologetically.

Most of the children were busy with their daily lives and had no time to learn.

...It goes without saying which category Aletta belonged to.

[Is that so? Well, can’t be helped.]

Aletta’s answer was expected, so the owner did not mind that much and proceeded ahead.

[Well first... let’s start from cleaning. The restaurant needs to be cleaned up until it’s

not dirty anymore. Well, I guess I'll be cleaning the kitchen one more time.]

[Yes!]

She obediently nodded.

[Oh, that's a good answer.]

The owner smiled, and then the first work for those two started.

[Fu... I wonder if this is right.]

While getting sweaty, Aletta finished her worked.

In her hands were a cloth to clean the top of the desk and a special chemical for cleaning, given by the owner.

[After washing my hands...]

She gulped her saliva.

She heard from the owner, when cleaning was over... it's time to eat.

[Ano, I finished cleaning!]

Aletta went to the kitchen to report.

[Oh, good work. I'll teach you to serve the customers after lunch. ...First, wash your hands well before eating your meal.]

The owner said and turned around, facing a black pot made of heavy iron placed on a convenient magic device that created fire without using firewood.

[I understand! I'll wash it here.]

Aletta went to the sink and washed her hands just the way the owner taught her by using the metal tube that emitted water.

Wet her hands first, and then rub her hands with the green chemicals near the sink, lathering them. She washed her nails and between her fingers carefully.

(It's amazing... this otherworld.)

While washing her hands, Aletta pondered on the wonders of this “otherworld dining hall”.

Another world.

After the wonderful breakfast, Aletta was told the truth from the owner. That this was the otherworld restaurant.

It seemed to be a restaurant in the “world” that was different from the world where Aletta lived.

Once in seven days here, when “Satur’s day” came, it connects to Aletta’s world through the entrance door.

From there it was said that residents of the Aletta’s came to eat here.

When she first heard about that, Aletta was surprised and convinced.

All those strange things were here, and a different world restaurant that made such delicious foods.

It was a mysterious thing that could only be said as a product of “another world”.

(I have to work hard as well. Such a good job can perhaps never be found again.)

The remuneration was unquestioned with the 10 silver coins and the extra pay.

There were no things like soup that with bits of floating rotten vegetables, old black bread that was hard like her situation before.

(Also, I wonder if it’s like the morning set like before...)

She swallowed her saliva.

The dish of otherworld dining hall that she ate this morning, that was really delicious.

It was the first time she ate such a delicious meal.

Her mouth was overflowing with saliva while thinking about it.

[O~i, Aletta-chan. The food’s almost ready so why don’t you seat at a dining table.]

[Yes!]

Aletta responded to the owner’s words.

[Waa...]

Aletta's eyes shined brightly while looking at the dish in front of her.

Of course, she did not know what kind of dish this was... but it smelled so delicious.

This dish was “golden” in colour.

Cooked eggs intertwined with small, white grains rounded in a bowl shape on top of a large plate.

There was a fragrant aroma and she could see finely chopped meat and green vegetables mixed with the dish.

Beside the plate were a bowl of brown soup and a transparent cup filled with brown tea and ice cubes.

[This is our meal. It's a rice dish, but it's delicious.]

While telling that to Aletta, he placed his portion in front of him and sat on the chair. It was the one he made first so it's a little cold.

He used the rest of yesterday's leftover and a delicious chashu¹ that he had made as a “hobby” using the boar meat he received from the otherworld hunter boy.

It's not possible to serve it to the customers, but there's no problem in using it now.

[Yes!...By the way, what is this dish?]

Aletta asked with bright eyes.

[This is fried rice.]

The owner said the name of the food while smiling.

A classic dish that the owner usually made for himself on Sunday.

When he was in high school, the owner spent two years training at a neighborhood Chinese restaurant, and made full use of the pot swinging technique which he trained at the kitchen. It's a menu that he was secretly confident in.

[Here, eat it while it's hot. Fried rice is best eaten when still hot.]

As he said so, the owner put his hands together and prayed.

[Itadakimasu.]

After he said so, he started to eat his portion sedately.

[Oh, um... to the Demon God, thank you for giving me the sustenance to live today.]

Learning from it, Aletta quickly finished her prayer and started to eat.

Scoop a spoonful from the mound in front of her and take it to her mouth.

[...]

After that, without saying anything, she ate silently.

(Thi, this is delicious!)

Only that one word was going through her head.

'Hofu hofu' while blowing at the fried rice, she continued to eat it without rest.

A dish using the ingredient of "rice" that she had never seen.

It was unknown to Aletta, but it fascinated her.

Using fragrant oil and sweetly seasoned, the flavor of the wild game was smoked with plenty of strong spices; along with little slices of vegetables, the hot rice had a wonderful taste.

It burst in the mouth, the umami as if dancing on the tongue and biting it further produced more taste.

And, it was the egg that enveloped the taste softly.

Meat, vegetables, eggs and rice.

One spoon, a spoonful of awesome flavours.

Her hands could not stop.

She ate the fried rice, occasionally drinking the soup and the cold tea.

In the morning, even though she ate a lot, her stomach was empty.

During the daytime, the owner shuffled out fried rice and they ate silently.

It was quiet... but it was a happy silence.

[Fuu... it was really delicious!]

After she finished eating her meal and drinking the iced tea, Aletta spoke out her impression.

She spoke from her heart that was moved by the otherworld cuisine.

There were no lies.

[Is that so, I appreciate your words.]

If such a thing was said from a young girl to the owner, it did not feel bad.

He replied Aletta with a smile. He felt reassured and told her,

[Then, after you take a break, will you do the training in the afternoon? First of all ... it's cleaning up the dishes.]

[Yes!]

Aletta smiled pleasantly to the words. Her eyes were filled with motivation.

At night,

[Haa... it was delicious.]

How to clean up the dishes, how to carry dishes with trays, how to deliver the menu books.

After being taught various things from the owner... dinner.

This time, their meal was the owner's noodle dish cooked with red sauce full of finely carved meat.



[It was delicious... especially that meat sauce.]

She waited for the owner who had gone to the back while soaking in the aftertaste of the meal.

She was surprised that she was properly paid for today's "training".

She got money being taught how to work.

Honestly, it was such a good situation that she thought that something was deceiving.

[Oo, sorry. I kept you waiting.]

The owner returned bringing a cloth bag.

[No, no! Thank you very much!]

At that moment, Aletta suddenly stood and unexpectedly bowed her head lowly to the owner.

It's not enough to thank the owner.

[Well, it doesn't bother me that much. Here's today's money. Are pieces of copper coins

enough?]

[Yes! Thank you for everything!]

Her voice was light and she accepted the bag.

Her bosom was warm, her stomach was full.

Aletta was content now.

[Well then, be careful, see you next week. Come in the morning after 6 days.]

[Yes!]

Being sent off by the owner, Aletta went through the door.

And Aletta came back to the slums of the Kingdom.

The black door disappeared once she closed it.

(Aa, after all it was the otherworld...)

Seeing that, Aletta once again recognized that she had a mysterious experience.

It seemed like a dream even though it was just a while ago.

But it was not a dream. There were several pieces of evidence.

Her clothes that she originally wore were washed and had no dirt.

A string to gather her hair that could grow and shrink well.

There were dozens of copper coins in her bosom... the promised wage of 10 silver coins paid for today's "training".

It wasn't a dream.

(Oh, that's right. I have to be careful...)

She took the silver coins out of the bag and put those inside her clothes and shoes.

Aletta came to the Kingdom alone and her few families were far away.

She was worn out from living at the slums.

While spreading her blanket and getting ready to go to bed, she thought of today's events.

(Today was really amazing...)

Eating 3 meals a day, getting more money than she had ever owned.

She was so hungry until yesterday.

[I have to work hard from tomorrow...]

With a satisfied feeling, she wrapped her body with a ragged blanket to rest her tired body.

(When tomorrow comes, I'll have to search for another job...)

It's not so much if you experience it, but there's no ordinary waiter in this world.

Maybe, she's a disappointment.

While thinking such a thing, Aletta closed her eyes... she began quietly sleeping.

... She did not know.

That the other world dining hall had been given a "curse to protect treasure" without permission by a certain regular customer.

By doing so, "she" would be able to know if something is in the "treasure".

And that she was deemed as "part of treasure" by forming a contract with the owner.

Three days later, an unprecedented major incident occurred in the Kingdom.

A legendary demon dragon boasting a crimson gigantic body like a castle several times larger than the ordinary dragon crossed over to the capital city.

When it showed up, was when countries were destroyed..... when the Magic Dragon

burnt and destroyed everything.

Kings, nobles, knights and magicians panicked in the advent of the embodiment of horror of such a legend.

(Under such circumstances, only the legendary sage Arturius will be calm, “The Red Queen will not do anything. I just came to see it,” he said.)

Fortunately, she only crossed the Kingdom without any attack and the trouble ceased by the evening.

And the capital city regained its hustle and bustle.

There was no one who noticed “that”.

... The Magic dragon that crossed over the sky spectacularly, was glancing at a girl of a demonic race that seems to be weak.

TN: There’s two possibilities for the chashu mentioned. Personally, I think it’s the first one –

1. Chashu – a popular way to flavor and prepare barbecued pork in Cantonese cuisine.



2. Marinated braised pork belly usually used for Ramen.



CHAPTER 22

FRIED SEAFOOD PLATTER



At dusk, Gard, a dwarven glass worker, climbed the mountain and asked Guilem who walked beside him.

[I wonder... can I ask you one thing?]

[What?]

His prideful beard shaking, Guilem who walked with bright eyes replied to Gard's inquiry.

[Why are we climbing the mountain?]

Gard asked the fundamental question.

[What the... I told you before. We're going to eat a meal today because it's Satur's Day.]

Guilem replied as a matter of course.

On the other hand, Gard was a bit irritated and asked further.

[Guilem... I don't know what you're thinking but you said that we're going to eat "fish" and alcohol.]

Guilem was a dwarf, a race who loved drinking alcohol and specialized at crafting and even brewing alcohol.

Guilem was the best at brewing alcohol among the dwarves.

In addition, Guilem made a “new drink”.

If Guilem said that it was “delicious alcohol”, then it tasted delicious.

That’s the way it was.

[Oh, the restaurant we’re going now, it has many delicious fish and alcohol. It was the first time I ate “a delicious fresh fish”! I was surprised.]

Gard exploded at the laughing Guilem.

[So why are we going to the mountains if we’re going out to eat fish!?!]

A long time had passed since they started to climb the mountain.

He did not see any water spring or fish around here.

He did not understand a thing what Guilem was saying.

[Oh, that’s because there’s a restaurant ahead of us. Just a little more.]

[Is there even such a thing!?!]

Gard was further angered by Guilem’s words.

If there was an idiot who was opening a restaurant in such a place, it was necessary to see whether their head was sane or not.

Gard grumbled whether there really was a restaurant ahead of them or not.

He lovingly stroked his favourite Battle Axe that was slung over his back.

[We’re here.]

Guilem pointed with his short and thick finger and declared that they had reached their destination.

Gard, who saw what Guilem was pointing at, without thinking of it... he clasped his Battle Axe tightly.

[Oi,... ahead of us is just a digging hut.]

A hut made of stone cut from the mountain.

From a dwarf's point of view, it was a shack that couldn't even be called a cabin.

Far from opening a restaurant, there seemed to be no one living inside.

[Oh, I built it. I don't specialize in carpentry so it's a little clunky.]

Not knowing Gard's thoughts, Guilem laughed heartily.

[Hey, Guilem... I thought you were my "friend".]

Dwarves had more stubborn tempers compared to other races.

It was a fact, and Gard disliked being insulted.

This was no way of teasing.

He thought so, and he tried to pull his favourite Battle Axe.

[...What's that door?]

Gard who found a door at the back of the cabin which didn't even have a front door raised his voice doubtfully.

At the back of the cabin was a black door, well-maintained with brass handle.

It was a good craftsmanship work, as opposed to the poorly made cabin.

[It's the door to the restaurant that sells the fish and alcohol.]

Guilem declared to his surprised friend.

[It's the entrance to the otherworld dining hall.]

Hearing Guilem's speech, Gard had a stupid face exactly like Guilem's when he found the door.

'Chirin chirin', the door opened.

[Welcome.]

[Oo, I came.]

The dwarf had better experience, and Guilem was used to greeting the middle-aged owner.

[...Is this a different world?]

Gard looked around as this was the first time he visited.

Even though the sun was setting, the customers could clearly see inside the brightly lit restaurant.

Most of them did not live at dwarven cities. Some of them were like monsters and demons.

They did not seem to fight, they just ate vigorously, and they were drinking alcohol.

(Indeed, this seems like another world...)

Gard was convinced by the interior.

The place where unusual races gathered together was not an ordinary place.

[So, what's the combination for today's seafood fries?]

[Aa, they're squid rings, cod and scallops today.]

To start, Gard asked "the combination for today" in a familiar manner and the owner also replied familiarly.

[Ah, I see I see. For now, I'll ask for two servings for both of us. Then, we want two mugs of beer and a bottle of whiskey. That is all.]

[Yes, thank you sir.]

[I'm counting on you owner. I got tired from climbing the mountain. Gard, this way.]

He quickly ordered before he got a seat, urged his friend and went to an appropriate table.

[Fuu, finally I can take a break.]

The chair's too high for a dwarf's legs, but it was comfortable.

[By the way, Guilem, you, you asked for "beer" and "whiskey", but are they the delicious alcohol that you talked about?]

[Oo that they are.]

Guilem leaned back and answered Gard's question.

[Here, there are unknown liquors. And they're all delicious. Because I said so.]

[What?! Is that so?]

To those words, Gard was surprised.

The alcohol called "new liquor" was said to be a visionary drink for the dwarves since Guilem started to sell them a couple of months ago.

After its maturity, the dwarves inside the town bought it until it was sold out, and it could not be bought elsewhere.

In addition, it was said that the human merchants who had connection with the dwarves said that their usual alcohol was too strong for their taste and was not popular for races other than the dwarves until now, and they might buy it for souvenir.

Dwarf drinkers were not allowed to buy enough to resell it as business.

Currently it was only available among dwarves due to the small amount that were made, but the amount made including those made by other liquor craftsmen would increase, and if the taste spread, it will be drunk by tribes other than dwarves.

And it was Guilem who made it.

That was not a lie.

[Really. That's fun...]

In response, Gard rocked his short legs under the table.

Guilem was watching him while grinning... and also swinging his legs under the table.

Then, they waited for a while.

[A, thank you for waiting! I brought your beer!]

The waitress who was a young girl wearing otherworld costume brought their beer. It was the first time Guilem saw her face.

Her left hand was clutching two large glasses with handle.

She put it down one by one in front of Guilem and Gard.

[Oo! It finally came! I've been waiting!]

[Ho ho! Is this a drink from another world? It's quite beautiful!]

The two people cheered at the beers that were placed in front of them.

Brought by the waitress was an orange coloured liquor with white foams like cloud on the surface.



[Please wait for a while for the rest of your order! Well then, enjoy!]

Speaking quickly, she went away to collect the empty dishes from guests who had finished eating.

[Well then!]

[Let's drink!]

The two dwarves briefly clinked their cups, opened their big mouths, tilted the glasses, and poured the beer inside their mouths.

The beers that contained bubbles made hissing sounds; went through their throats

and into their stomachs.

They gulped all of it until the glasses were empty.

In a blink of eye, the two large cups were emptied at the same time.

[[Puha~!]]

They breathed out simultaneously.

[Oo! This beer is really delicious!]

[Isn't it!? It's weak but the feeling when it went down the throat was unbearable! It's even better when you drink it cold! I always drink it when it's cold!]

Guilem replied to Gard with his eyes wide open.

He was also surprised at first.

The taste of beer was similar to the ones made from wheat, but when it was chilled the taste became different.

Then he realized it.

That a chilled beer was best drunk when your body was tired.

The cold beer like the spring water in the shade of this mountain was the liquor that Guilem always asked first after climbing the mountain.

[I'll take another serving!]

[Of course! ...Hey little girl! Two more beers please!]

[Yes, of course!]

He asked the waitress who was cleaning the tables for refills.

[...However, this glass cup is really good.]

While waiting, Gard stared at the empty glass cup.

A was a straight tube with a handle and no ornament.

It was clear enough to see through it...

[It looks like transparent, clear alcohol... I'm going to try to recreate it.]

As a glass craftsman, he gave his frank opinion.

Usually, the glass cups that Gard made were works of art with various elaborate ornaments applied to the surface.

But this time, he noticed, seeing a crystal clear cup without any extra decoration.

[Clear liquor itself is a decoration... other decorations are just obstructions.]

[Oh, I thought you'd say that.]

To his friend who gave the same opinion, Guilem laughed cheerfully.

Then the two friends waited while fidgeting...

[Sorry I made you wait! I brought your beers and fried seafood platters!]

[[Ho ho!]]

They cheered at the appearance of the young girl who brought their refill and food.

[Aha... so this is the good fish dish that you recommended...]

Gard looked at the food that was gently placed in front of his eyes.

On a white plate were 3 kinds of deep-fried food put on top of a pale green leafy vegetable.

Three large ones shaped like tree leaves, three like round rings, and three small round Kawahara stone shapes.





[Oh ho, it seems to be delicious indeed, but fish...]

Gard's face expressed half doubt and half expectations. The question was whether it was really delicious or not.

Gard's common sense did not believe that the fish in front of him was delicious.

The Dwarven City where Gard lived was surrounded by mines.

Naturally, the sea was far away. The fishes that were sold at the city were heavily salted.

They couldn't fish at the river flowing nearby. Influenced by the land patterns, they smelled like mud and contained lots of small bones.

For Gard, fish was "salty anyhow, muddy and contains lots of bones".

It was not that it can't be eaten, but it was not delicious.

[Try to eat it. It's a fish made to shape like a leaf, the rest are shellfish and squid. They're all sea creatures.]

Guilem who knew the deliciousness of fish took a red and a blue vials from the top of the table, wanting to use them including the white sauce on the plate.

[Really, is that so...]

At least, the otherworld alcohol was delicious.

Believing that, Gard tried the fried seafood.

Pierce the fish with a fork and lift it to your mouth.

He opened his mouth widely and put it inside.

(Oooo!?)

It was a taste that Gard never experienced.

The first thing tasted was the coating used for deep-fry.

The good taste of oil and wheat. It lightly flitted with a smell that stimulated the stomach.

(Is, is this the taste of fish!?)

And beneath the coating, the taste that was unbelievable to be fish.

The thin and subdued fish, in a hot fluff, it gently collapsed inside the mouth.

Fresh white but solid fish.

There was not much of the fishy smell; the bones were also not inside.

It mixed with the light taste of fried coating.

(I can't believe it!)

Gard acted according to his instincts.

Gard took his beer with his empty left hand and gulped it down.

The taste of fish and beer intermingled in his mouth.

It was the best compatibility for Gard.

(Not yet! I'm still not satisfied!)

After swallowing, Gard reached for the other two.

First of all, the fried squid, fried in a ring shape.

(Squid is it!? This is also delicious!)

Unlike the fried fish... it had a pleasant “chewiness”, pushing against his teeth firmly.

It was firmly cut inside the mouth by biting, and the delicious taste that was different from fried fish spread in his mouth.

Gard threw the squid rings one after another into his mouth, chewing while enjoying the taste, and in a blink of eye, he ate it all.

(The end... Oh!?)

And the last fries, the scallop, were superb.

The taste of shellfish under the coating was stronger than the other two.

The moment it was bitten, it broke into little pieces.

To that feel and taste, it was very regrettable that its size was small.

It was finished in an instant.

[...They're really good! The fish and the liquor!]

The delayed impression came out after their meal ran out.

[Oh right, Guilem! You always come here... yeah?]

Gard, who praised Guilem jealously, noticed it.

Guilem was eating the food like himself.

...Making the most of the 3 sauces.

[The combination of tartar sauce and fried fish is the best! Shoyu and sauce are not bad, but tartar sauce is the best!]

With the light fish and fragrant coating, a soft sour taste was added.

While admiring the best combination, Guilem devoured the fried seafood and the beer.

[...O, oy Guilem, what is that?]

Gard asked, trembling a little.

Noticing the change to his friend, Guilem told him about another charm of this restaurant.

[Oh, this one is tartar sauce. For eating fish, this one is indispensable. It's made of boiled eggs and taste sour, but it's really delicious when it's mixed with fried fish. In the red bottle is Shoyu, it is not only salty. This guy is incredibly compatible with fish dishes, if you put a little bit, it jump starts the taste of freshly baked fish.

The last blue bottle is the sauce. It has a moderate taste that's quite complicated and also fits non-fried fish. In a sense, it's quite versatile.

Which sauce you want to eat with the seafood. The fish used in fried seafood platter changes every time, so it's a problem...]

[Why didn't you say so!? That kind of thing is important!]

Trembling with expectation, Gard shouted.

Even the things up to that moment were incomplete.

In other words... it would become more delicious, wouldn't it?

He could not forgive his friend who kept silent about this, but now there was something that he must do.

[Excuse me; I brought your whiskey ———]

[Hey, young lady! I want to order 3 more fried seafood platter! As soon as possible!]

[——— Hiya!?]

Two last orders. Hurrying up to the waitress who brought two glasses with big ice lumps that didn't melt for a long time and a bottle containing dark brown, clear liquor.

[Oh, miss! I want 3 more portions! This restaurant is delicious, but the amount is too small for a dwarf!]

Guilem also added his order in a familiar manner.

[Oh, today I will eat and drink a lot! This time it's my treat!]

[Oh! I'd thought you'd say that!]

While waiting for their next orders, the two people drank...

Open a more sophisticated whiskey, pour it into the glasses and they talked while drinking.



[Kuhaa~! All the alcohols at otherworld are delicious! Is this the garden of the gods!?!]

[Maybe! None of this is unlikely in our world!]

While drinking the whiskey in minutes, their mouths did not stop.

[Maybe that's it!? Do they still have more delicious fish and liquor!?]

[Of course! Especially the Seishu³ sake made from rice of West continent! Besides, wine is different from this one!]



Even if it's fish, there's plenty cuisines besides deep-fried! I want to come back every day already!]

[I agree with you!]

While agreeing with Guilem, Gard realized.

Why did Guilem build a hut in front of the door, and why...

Next morning.

Gard who woke up at the floor of the shack jumped up.

(...It's seems it's not a dream.)

He was worried that yesterday was a dream or something, but he realized what was different.

In his hands, as proof that he went to the restaurant, was an unopened bottle of whiskey that he embraced like a son.

(Well, there's no way dwarves can lose their minds to that level.)

Yesterday, both of them continued to eat fish and drink alcohol.

They emptied bottles of whiskeys and stacked lots of plates.

And the dwarf also lightly brought a huge pot to go; the young girl of demon tribe came and told them that the shop was closing.

(...I must thank Guilem.)

He aimed at glance at his friend who was still sleeping and snoring.

Delicious liquor and delicious food. And a wallet that was nearly empty and a glass bottle of delicious alcohol that he bought.

If he got this much, there were a lot of things he must give back.

(First of all, I have to make this cabin more convenient...)

Gard made a plan for the future.

A mountain hut made of stone that was outstandingly beautiful was built, and it will be a useful resting place for travelers and merchants visiting the Dwarven City.

The hut was made by a dwarf, the manager of the cabin, and it was made so people could rest inside, but there was one mystery.

It was a heavy-duty steel door at the back of the cabin, made so that it could be hardly broken in.

The dwarves that made this cabin said that there was nothing behind the door with no key. Only a very small room.

Then why did they make a door as if placing it before a treasury without any meaning in the first place?

Only they who made it know why.

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1. It was written Seafood Fry in the raw, but I changed it to this as it's more appropriate.
 2. For some reason in the raw, both Guilem and Gard used ワシ which meant eagle to refer to themselves. I don't know why though so I just thought it's a dwarf thing.
 3. Seishu sake – under Japanese liquor laws, sake is labeled with the word seishu (clear sake)

CHAPTER 23

CHEESECAKE



A mercenary based at the capital city of the Kingdom, “Hidden in the Night” Hilda was currently at a certain forest.

[...Whew. You sure are troublesome.]

There were 30 goblins at the dark of the night and the last one had turned his back to the herd of goblins to run. She checked her night goggles made of quartz plate and pulled the trigger of her crossbow.

The crossbow was her favourite ever since she became a lone mercenary. Even when wielded by the slender arms of a woman, it had the power to punch through iron armor.

Her head was covered by a hood resembling a helmet made with hard animal leather and goggles using clear quartz plate to protect her eyes.

Her legs were covered by durable leather trousers, the upper body with sleeveless leather jacket along with mithril gloves which was fingerless to sense the wind.

Hilda, who had accurate ears that could navigate during night and hear small sounds, acted alone.

Instead, there were no other mercenaries that could act like Hilda who could run through the woods at the middle of the night with little lighting.

It was inevitable.

[I'll take their treasure later... I wonder if I should return to my base.]

After completing the extermination of goblins, Hilda was more open and talked to herself more than usual.

According to experience, goblins stored their treasure at their nest.

As there were 30 goblins, the amount should be enough.

Most of them were garbage that could not be sold for even a single coin, but sometimes coppers, silver coins and other golden items could be mixed in, so it's not sure.

Of course she would receive a reward for completion, but that's just the way it was.

More than 20 years ago, she grew up in a cold land where wheat could not be grown. At the Empire's pioneering village, their meals were mainly baked and boiled Baron's fruit which grew inside the soil and could not be eaten by the birds.

Hilda visited the forest to exterminate the goblins as requested by one of the villages.

After 3 days, Hilda had finally eradicated all 30 goblins and completed the request.

[You're no longer a goblin.]

She tidied up her crossbow and arrows, slung them over her back, and returned to the place she prepared as her base.

Although it's a simple base where a tent was erected and firewood was collected to make a bonfire, Hilda who was accustomed to such a life felt relieved.

And Hilda found "it" on her way back to the base.

[...Huh?]

Hilda suddenly stopped walking.

[Is there...something?]

Although there was no basis, her intuition made her legs stop.

Hilda checked her surroundings with her eyes.

Her eyesight which was almost the same during daytime even in little starlight caught it, and Hilda elaborated unintentionally.

[Is that... a door?]

In front of her was a black door with golden handle.

...It was not something you would find in a forest.

[...Until yesterday, there was no such thing, right?]

She passed through this area yesterday.

That's what she knew.

Until yesterday, there was no such door in that place.

[...I smell treasure.]

Hilda, who somehow sensed a "good feeling" from the door, grasped the handle and opened the door.

Hilda always believed in her intuition.

With no equipment like what she had now and without having a bow, she only had her eyes and ears. Since the beginning, she survived due to her own intuition and became the top-notch mercenary that she was now.

She had no doubt at all.

When she applied force on the handle, the door opened easily.

[A, wel, welcome!]

A girl wearing strange costume saw Hilda and greeted loudly.

While listening to the bell sound from the door, Hilda was surprised at the girl's presence.

From behind her goggles, she could see the girl wearing a strange costume with short sleeves and skirt.

That's good.

But the problem was... her head.

[You're... a demon?]

With a low voice, she asked the girl in front of her.

Yes, her head, with clean fluffy golden hair... and a pair of jet black horns.

If she was a normal human, it could be thought as an unusual hair ornament. But Hilda's eyes could not be deceived.

[Eh, ah, that...]

[Ah, no, I'm sorry. I won't say anything.]

In a hurry to placate the panicking demon girl, Hilda decided to reveal her identity.

She removed her goggles and took down her hood.

Her pupils which appeared from under the goggles reacted to the bright light of the shop and shrunk "length wise".

The dark brown pointed ears covered with animal fur hidden under the hood moved quickly.

[...I am also a demon. My name is Hilda.]

Hilda, a demon mercenary who received the cat's eyes and ears from the Demon God's protection, said.

[I see, this is the otherworld dining hall.]

While listening to the circumstances from the waitress Aletta, Hilda took a seat.

[Yes! Every dish here is very tasty!]

Aletta answered so with a full smile.

Those words were not something the owner compelled her to say. She really meant them.

Hilda drank the slightly fruit tasting water that Aletta told her was complimentary, removed her mithril gloves and wiped her hands with the hot towel provided.

(Well, it's a nice restaurant inside.)

The water was gentle on her dry throat and the cloth was comfortable.

Her intuition understood. Here was a nice restaurant.

(The guests were eating their food vigorously.)

Inside the otherworld dining hall, several guests were talking about the delicious food.

All their faces were smiling. As Aletta said, all of the customers thought that the food here was delicious.

(...Over there is the Samurai Master Tatsugorou, next to him... no doubt the great sage Arturius.)

A legendary mercenary that hailed from the Western continent and a man called the world's best Wiseman.

It's the first time Hilda saw the two of them after hearing about them so many times before.

In Hilda's world, this was a bit of an incident.

[Yes... so, what do you want to eat?]

[Let's see. What can you make?]

Hilda listened to Aletta's confirmation.

[Yes... Uh, can you read Samanak language...?]

[I can read it. I learned it after becoming a mercenary.]

Aletta blushed hearing her answer.

[Oh, then wait a moment! I'll bring you the menu!]

She declared, retreated to the back and came back quickly.

[You can order the food that's written here. Please order after you decide!]

After giving a thin big book to Hilda, Aletta went to another customer.

[...Well, it's quite a lot.]

Hilda, who was left alone, did not panic and opened the menu.

What was written was a list of food and their explanations.

Most of the dishes were not known to Hilda.

[Ho. They also have croquette and fried potato... nu!?!]

She could recognize a few food items.

Hilda, who was thinking of ordering a staple dish of the Empire using Baron's fruit, was surprised again after turning the pages.

[...Sweet confectionaries!?!]

"Dessert" was written on the title.

The names of various sweets were lined up there.

Hot cake, parfait, pudding, pound cake...

Not all of them were familiar, but Hilda could tell.

[...This is quite cheap.]

The sweets that were written could be bought with a few pennies and a high value coin could buy around 10 plates.

Ordinarily, confectionaries had a high price, so even a little piece could cost at least a silver coin.

That's because all sweet things like honey and sugar were priceless. Commoners could not afford them and usually only nobles could eat them.

Hilda had only eaten some seasonal fruits that could be bought with a few copper coins. She had never eaten a confectionary before.

[Mumumu... But if it's this price, it's positively a cake.]

Price as high as the other dishes... it's unquestionable that it was a confectionary.

Looking at the price, Hilda decided to eat dessert.

[What to order... ho, soufflé cheesecake...?]

When you got lost, rely on your intuition.

Choose the one that seemed right.

Three kinds of cheesecake were rare, baked and soufflé.



According to the descriptions, Hilda's favourite was the soft sweet baked goods. Hilda decided to order that.

[Hey! Aletta! I want to order!]

[Yes! I'm here!]

She called Aletta and placed her order.

[Give me this soufflé cheesecake. Along with tea please.]

Hilda who found the phrase "all drinks are half price when ordered with dessert including pudding" written at the end of the dessert section decided to order tea together with the cheesecake.

[Yes! Thank you very much!]

After Aletta nodded to Hilda's order, she retreated to the kitchen at the back.

She waited for a while.

[Sorry I've kept you waiting! It's a set of soufflé cheesecake and tea. In the blue jar there is sugar. Feel free to put it in the drink.]

[I understand. Thank you.]

She was surprised that the sugar was free to use but she accepted it.

Red tea poured into a white elegant clay pot and a triangle cheese coloured dessert with reddish purple sauce poured on it.



This was the first time Hilda saw both food.

(First of all... it's quite white. I thought it would be browner.)

She opened the blue pot and peered inside.

Pure white grain with a spoon to scoop it.

For the time being, Hilda put some sugar on top of her palm and licked it.

(...It's really sugar.)

Convinced it was sugar due to the sweet taste spreading in her mouth, she put three spoons inside her cup of tea.

[...Yes, delicious.]

Along with the sweetness, the tea contained a hint of astringency and sourness.

It was an unexpected taste, but it settled in her tired body and was very delicious.

[Well, next...]

She started on her ordered soufflé cheesecake.

Take a small fork and cut the tip of the triangle... starting from the part not covered by the sauce.

[It's a dessert that taste like cheese... mu!?!]

She brought it to her mouth...

It was her first time eating cheesecake. It was certainly sweet and a little bit sour with the aroma of cheese.

But this taste was utterly amazing.

(Stupid... it was written that it was soft, but this cheesecake is really soft!?)

Yes, that confectionary was really soft.

It had a moist and light texture, and gently collapsed inside her mouth.

What was left behind was the sweet taste of cheese.

Although she had surely eaten it, only the lingering aftertaste was left in her mouth.

[Oh my god!]

She could not forget this feeling, she could not believe it.

She cut another piece and threw it into her mouth.

Again, the sweet taste of cheese that gently collapsed in her mouth.

But, that was not all.

(Mu!? This purple sauce is also exquisite!?)

Yes, Hilda cut a big piece of cake earlier, so a bit of the purple sauce was on the piece.

The taste was also wonderful.

(This sauce, it's berries boiled with sugar!?)

The sweet and sour taste of the sauce had a great compatibility with the cheesecake.

It had a deep sweetness that could not be found in raw fruits alone.

The dense sweetness of cheese and berries, along with the two different types of acidity resulted in one harmony.

Soft, sweet and sour... incredibly delicious.

Moreover, the compatibility with the tea she ordered was outstanding.

[Excuse me! Aletta! Another serving of cheesecake... no, bring me two servings! I'll also have another pot of tea!]

It was inevitable that Hilda asked for reorders.

[Yes! Just a moment please!]

Aletta pleasantly replied to Hilda's request.

[Fu... to think that I could bring it home...]

While breathing out the fragrance of cheese, Hilda wandered around the forest very slowly.

In her hand was a large cake cut into six slices that she bought from the otherworld dining hall.

Along with a small glass bottle containing the sauce called jam.

She only had to pay 1 silver coin for this purchase.

While praising herself, she gently embraced it and rushed to her encampment.

[...I'm looking forward to tomorrow morning.]

After that, though the man that was the owner said that it would rot if not eaten tomorrow, it was not a problem.

If it tasted that great, she could eat all 6 slices in one meal.

(Aa, no matter... I can endure until tomorrow.)

She denied the idea of eating another slice that passed through her thoughts.

She would regret it if she ate all of the cake while the remaining aftertaste still lingered in her mouth after eating at the restaurant.

Hilda's intuition said so.

CHAPTER 24

NATTO SPAGHETTI



[Wow...]

The elf, Faldania, born in the forest of Sienna, was overwhelmed by the brilliance of the two statues known as the greedy “gold” and the ferocious “red” of the Demon Dragons called “Seven Overlord”. Looking up the huge tree, the crumbling ruins remained vivid.

Faldania began travelling away from the forest of Sienna, visiting once a year, which was the center of the large ocean of trees that rejected people other than elves.

The various defense magic that the elves of capital casted, along with the myriad of beasts roaming the forest, and the art of using the grace of the forest to survive; combined with the fact that the capital was at the center of the forest, it would take at least half a month to reach it.

A huge tree standing in the place that rejected people other than genuine elves was the entrance of the place that Faldania aimed for.

Capital of the forest.

A remnant of the age of prosperity 1,000 years ago, left after the fight between the Demon Dragons “Seven Overlord” and the champion of the world, the only remaining elven capital up to date.

Due to the “Great Illness” 1,000 years ago, their number was drastically reduced, and since the collapse of civilization, the elves chose to build a small closed village in abundant forests which then became their “country”.

[My father’s friend resides here...]

Kept in her bag after she left, she gently touched the letter her father sent her to use.

A letter of introduction to an old friend living at the Forest Capital, written due to his concerns of his young and passionate daughter Faldania that traveled alone.

When she was just a hundred years old child, she became a gourmet and started to study about food, as a pioneer of her life.

If there was no particular place to go, try visiting there.

Such a thing was written.

In fact, in order to recreate the dishes of that otherworld, first of all she had to learn her world.

To do that, she needed to visit the elven capital where the mystery of the elven knowledge was still inherited.

Faldania thought so.

[Yes... this way I can unlock as much as I can alone.]

Faldania who came near to the giant tree which was the entrance to the Forest Capital investigated the magic casted there and sighed quietly.

The huge trees were the magic of the barrier.

The magic that repelled approaching enemies so that the forest monsters did not get

in was an accumulation of elven magical skill. It could not be studied in a short time unless by a magician of considerable skill.

Those that did not have magic could not enter the Forest Capital.

Silently opening, for Faldania who learned magic from her father back at her hometown, was a hole large enough for one person to barely pass through temporarily.

[My father told me to contact his friend at the city with the magic of the letter so I opened it... but it's faster to do it myself than this.]

She judged so and lifted the magic.

Maybe if she tried to cancel the magic... an alarm magic would be activated, so it's more convenient to communicate with the person she came for.

She was a true elf of Sienna forest.

There was no problem for her to visit the Forest Capital.

Thinking so, Faldania weakened the barrier magic only for a while... and entered the last city of elves.

Meanwhile,

[...Oh? The barrier is interfered.]

In the mansion for elves that was grown from a living tree, Christian who worked for research noticed it.

[...Hmm, they're skill is average.]

Originally, the management of the barrier for the forest protection was left to Christian.

As a young elf that lived in the city and had not reached 400 years of age, he learned to wield sword and sorcery in the outside world and possessed high magical skill.

And another warning magic was automatically transmitted to the barrier's administrator when receiving interference such as cancellation was also

superimposed to the barrier.

[They're not trying to do it secretly... It's a guest of elves apparently.]

Concluding his hypothesis, he went to examine it himself.

It was straightforward and easy to understand the magic of the barrier. It was clear that they're going to pass through by temporarily weakening the barrier.

He did not think that it was a lack of skill that they did not notice the alarm magic, it's probably that it's their intent that they did not conceal the fact that they're interfering with the barrier.

[I recall a bit of this cancelling habit... Maybe she has arrived?]

He noticed that the way this unknown magician cancelled magic resembled his friend that he traveled together with for 50 years. Not to mention that half a year ago, he received a letter sent by said friend.

——It said that his daughter traveled to make more new dishes. She would probably first head to the Forest Capital, so please take care of her with best regards.

How his cute daughter resembled his beautiful wife, how he would not forgive him for a long time if he had strange intentions to his daughter, it was written in various ways even though it should be written minimally.

[Oh well. If she waits for a while, I would find her and go there... Speaking of which, today's the day that door appears.]

It would be helpful if she sought to make new dishes.

That place was the starting point of Christian's new quest... that dining hall.

Faldania unlocked the barrier of the big tree and entered the Forest Capital.

[...Here, right?]

There were countless houses at the capital... made from living trees.

Her father's friend... after asking various elves, she soon found Christian's house.

— Christian's house had an unusual smell for the last ten years.

At first she did not understand, but she got the idea after walking around.

She could smell it from afar.

...Something rotten.

[Excuse me... Long time no see, Christian.]

Fortunately, as soon as she entered the house, a household member appeared.

That person had blond hair and green eyes, a fine sword made of mithril enchanted with magic hung on his belt.

From a human's perspective, that person appeared to be a year or two older than Faldania, but through the eyes of elves, it was obvious when Faldania perceived the magical power that that person was older than her father and had strong magical power.

Her father said that Christian, who was 100 years older than him, lived with his family.

Elves usually made golems if they wanted to hire a person, and no doubt that that face was the same one that Faldania saw back when she was 30 years old.

[Oh, that's right. You must be Faldania. I have heard stories from Edmond. The barrier's magic was wonderfully cancelled. Even the Forest Capital's elves can't do so when they're just about 100 years old. You're truly Edmond's and Matilda's daughter.]

[Yes. Thank you very much.]

In return to Christian's generous praise, Faldania's replied a bit shyly.

[Aa, take it easy. There's no need for you to use such polite words. You're my best friend's daughter, and aren't you already an adult? You can treat me as a friend.]

Then Christian said what he was most concerned about.

[Okay...I understand. Best regards, Christian.]

[Aa, best regards, Faldania.]

Then they shook hands and became friends.

[Anyway... what is this smell? Somehow, it smells like something rotten.]

(I see. She is not timid, this girl)

To Faldania who anxiously awaited his reply, Christian said with a wry smile.

[It is rotten in a sense. I'm doing research to rot elf beans².]

[...What is that?]

Hearing Christian's answer, Faldania frowned.

She knew elf beans.

It was a mysterious plant that when grown, they enriched nutrition deficient soil and as such, were often sowed at withered forest. It was popular among elves as the beans could be eaten.

The freshly-grown ones were beautiful green, the ripened and dried beans were close to pale yellow, and when boiled it was slightly sweet and tasty.

[I know elf beans... but you rot it?]

However, she never heard of someone decaying it.

Elf beans would not rot if they were dried, and most elves were able to cast preservation magic to prevent decay.

Preservation magic was not an advanced magic. Once a magician cast it, food could last for several days.

Of course, the entire race of elves was excellent magicians.

Faldania herself, after purchasing Yakionigiri from the "shop" sometimes, casted preservation magic if she had to carry it for several days until she finished eating it.



Christian, who was a magic swordman, had greater magical skill than Faldania. She was sure he could cast such magic.

[...No, it's not exactly rotten.]

After a little thought, Christian decided to paraphrase.

[Do you know what cheese is?]

First he had to make sure.

[Cheese? The one that humans make? I heard that milk was stored in a dark place for a long time without preservation magic to grow mold. Normally it should become spoiled, but the humans said that it was delicious.]

It was a food not familiar to elves, but she heard about it while traveling near human settlements.

[Exactly. The humans called it "fermentation". It's similar to how they make alcohol. It is one of the preservation methods for humans who cannot cast preservation magic like us. I am trying to do that with the elf beans.]

Replying to Faldania's words, Christian proceeded to talk about a recent exploration.

The elves had no idea how to do "fermentation", so Christian tried his research methods one by one.

[Elf beans? Can you do it?]

[Oh, I can... I've eaten the real thing.]

He nodded with conviction.

He knew what the “finished good” was like. All he had to do was recreate it.

[The thing that you ate... Where in Forest Capital did you eat it?]

On the other hand, Faldania was inspired by food stuff that she had never known, and unexpectedly inquired Christian.

Rotten... “fermented” elf beans according to Christian.

She thought it might be useful for her quest.

[No, it's not at the capital... Well, in a sense, it is.]

However, the answer was returned ambiguously.

[...What do you mean?]

Not being able to grasp the intention of the words, Faldania listened.

Christian on the other hand, cleared his throat and elaborated.

[About 10 years ago, a door to another world appeared at Forest Capital... that door leads to an otherworld dining hall that offers an unusual dish, where food is served with fermented beans.]

Ten years ago, as the administrator of the forest barrier, he noticed that a door to another world appeared in this forest.

It was the start of Christian's new quest when he entered the door to ascertain its identity.

And one more thing he wanted to check.

The question he had after reading Edmond's letter.

When could a young, passionate and proud elf that was good at cooking and living peacefully at her hometown suddenly traveled out of the forest thinking of making

“new cuisine”?

[Don't tell me...]

Hearing Christian's words, Faldania thought.

To a certain event that started her journey.

[...That reaction. As I thought, you know of the otherworld dining hall.]

It was highly likely that “she saw a tribe that was not an elf that delivered a delicious dish that she had never ate before”.

To Faldania's reaction, Christian realized that his hypothesis was correct.

The sound of tinkling and magic trigger echoed.

While listening to that sound, Christian and Faldania entered to the otherworld dining hall.

[Welcome... This is rare.]

The owner saw the new customers and said that.

The owner had seen it before in movies and TV. An elven young man that was a regular and a young elf lady that had been coming for a year.

The two people coming at the same time was a pattern that he had never seen before.

[Oh, she is my friend's daughter. Today I'm treating her... oh, orders as usual, two portions of egg-free Natto Spaghetti please.]

With the bitter memory of eating an egg, Christian ordered.

[Okay.]

The owner nodded and retreated back.

[Natto Spaghetti... it's also a food that the elves can eat?]

While watching the flow of events, Faldania asked grimly.

Other than Tofu Steak and Yakionigiri, she did not know any other food that did not use meat, fish, eggs or milk.

(How many foods are there in this restaurant!?)

The extraordinariness of this restaurant still increased her impatience.

[...Natto Spaghetti has a peculiar smell. It is not popular with other customers. I usually order this.]

He explained such to Faldania.

To begin with, it was very courageous to ask the food which was described “noodle dish topped with sauce which uses rotten beans” in the menu box.

When Christian came to this restaurant for the first time, he would not eat anything except a “dish not using meat, fish, eggs or milk” from the young owner who just succeeded the store.

...Although he became the first fan of this dish after he ate it.

And then, it came.

[Sorry I made you wait! Here’s your Natto Spaghetti!]

A young demon waitress that looked around the same age as them brought their food.

Thin and yellow noodle dishes.

Poured on top was sauce using soil-coloured elf beans along with thinly cut dark green smelly herb.



[Well then, let's eat. Don't worry, this dish is very delicious.]

To that extent, Christian took a silver fork and started on his Natto Spaghetti.

Lightly stir the Natto on top with the noddle at the bottom using a fork.

After mixing, bring a forkful into the mouth and chew.

— Yup. Delicious.

Natto Spaghetti was as delicious as usual.

Recently similar things were made in Forest Capital; the unique stickiness, fragrance and astringency of Natto.

The saltiness of Shoyu sauce of this restaurant, which was different from salt, was mixed with soup made from sea grass and created a rich flavor.

Along with the taste of sea grass... was raw herb and black pepper.

It was so pale that it became one dish with almost no taste of wheat but the flavor intertwined with the noodles.

(Apparently she likes it.)

While eating it, Christian observed Faldania who was seating in front of him.

She was also eating silently.

She did not think it was unpleasant, eating at the same pace as Christian.

The Natto Spaghetti was eaten at considerable speed.

(Hmm, she seems to be thinking something...?)

Suddenly Christian noticed it.

Faldania was eating her food while thinking something.

(I wonder if she's pondering the taste?)

Well, if she's studying about cooking, she would be picky about the taste.

Thinking so, Christian concentrated on his food in front of him.

He still didn't know. What the girl in front of him was thinking and doing.

The incident occurred after they finished eating.

When the meal was finished, and they were waiting for the bill, Faldania asked the waitress who was retrieving the empty plates.

[Say, the natto used in this noodle dish... I would like to eat it with rice. Can I order it?]

As it was normal, it was extremely easy.

(Wha, what!?)

Christian was astonished.

Natto was eaten with noodles.

He believed that for the last 10 years.

That sense was overturned so easily.

(Ah, impossible! There was no dish of "Natto Rice" written on the menu!)

But the demon waitress lightly tilted her head to those words.

[Err... Please wait a bit. I'll ask the owner.]

She retreated to the back for a while.

[Okay... this is a Western restaurant though.]

While murmuring that, the owner brought it.

White rice served discreetly in a small bowl.

A small dish with thick green herbs and a yellow paste.

A bottle made slightly different from the ones on the table.

And... a bowl of Natto.

The owner placed them in front of Faldania and said,

[Stir the Natto with the soy sauce in the bottle and pour it onto the white rice. Add the green onion and the mustard as you like. They're spicy so add them little by little.]

[Yes, I understand. Ah, I want to take away Yakionigiri too. 3 Miso⁴ Onigiri⁵ and the other 2 in any flavor.]



[Okay. I'll make those 2 in negi⁶ miso flavor.]

After replying, the owner retreated to the back.

[Ex, excuse me! I want the same thing... the rice with natto!]

Looking at the situation, Christian ordered in a reflex.

[Okay. Please wait a moment.]

And the same thing was placed in front of Christian.

[Well~! As expected! Natto really matches well with rice!]

In front of him, Faldania tasted the food with a childish gesture.

Feeling slightly impatient, Christian started to work on his food.

He stirred the Natto steadily and firmly without a concern using a fork.

Next was dashishoyu⁷... the same sauce used for Natto Spaghetti was added and he continued to stir the Natto.

Finally, following the owner's advice to add the green herbs and yellow paste little by little... tasting the mixture while adjusting the taste carefully.

(...It's certainly Natto. And this...)

The stickiness and flavor of Natto with the saltiness of dashishoyu, along with the mustard added for a hidden flavor and the crispiness of green onion, it's spicy.

It was the first time he ate Natto by itself, but it was also delicious.

Finally, the Natto that was adjusted to Christian's taste was poured onto the rice.



Then, the rice with Natto was carried to Christian's mouth. He was stunned.

It was delicious.

The taste of earth from the Natto.

That... along with the warm white rice, the flavor was enhanced.

It's an outstanding compatibility... for example like best friends comparable to Christian and Edmond who had been friends for a long time.

The slightly sweet and simple rice flavor, combined with Natto which had a strong scent, the taste transformed into a finished state.

Natto was created to be eaten with rice.

It was such a taste that created that outrageous idea.

To Christian, this taste was wonderful.

The daughter of his close friend Edmond in front of him... he saw a girl who exceeded him in terms of taste researching even though her age was a third of Christian's.

Greediness for the taste of food, thoughts unrestrained by common sense, and the courage to recklessly tackle a challenge...

(Aa, this is youth...)

He's convinced. The girl in front of him was already... an independent elf seeker.

After finishing their meal and leaving otherworld dining hall, Christian gave Faldania one information.

[E!? Rice also exists in our world!?]

Faldania was astonished.

It was unexpected that rice was also grown in their world.

Faldania had been travelling for a year.

It did not exist in her home forest Sienna, and during her travels around elven forests and human cities, she had never seen rice grown or sold anywhere.

[Oh, there is. In the Western Continent, rice was their staple food.]

Christian nodded heavily.

Longer than Faldania... there was a time when he traveled for around 100 years.

Rice was rarely grown or seen at the Eastern Continent where Faldania lived, but at the Western Continent, rice was grown more than wheat and was eaten on a daily basis.

The taste was far different from the rice of otherworld dining hall, but it was the same plant.

[He~e... is that so...]

Listening to Christian, determination shone in Faldania's eyes.

Rice. This crop was the one that Faldania sought.

In order to complete "a meal that exceeds the foods of otherworld cafeteria", it was absolutely necessary in the future.

It was the moment her next destination was decided.

(Aa, youth.)

Seeing the determined Faldania, Christian decided to give her something.

[Faldania, I give you this.]

He passed a small pot containing Christian's treasure.

[What's... this? Don't tell me... it's a bit different from the one used for Yakionigiri but... Miso? ... Don't tell me the way to make Miso is to rot elf beans, no, to ferment them!?!]

Looking inside, Faldania confirmed the identity of the reddish brown paste from the appearance and the smell and felt surprised.

Her evaluation of "research of fermentation of elf beans" that Christian conducted rose greatly.

She did not know. To think that Miso which is one of the fascinating seasonings used at otherworld dining hall could be made by fermenting elf beans.

[Aa, that's right. Elf bean Miso was created by chance during my years of research.]

Christian nodded.

The way of "making it by chance" was currently researched... that was the valuable item that did not exist anywhere else in that world.

[Take it... apparently this is your favourite?]

[... Really, thank you for everything, thank you.]

Faldania gently received the pot and stuffed it inside her magical bag with an impressed face.

It's a valuable item. She would use it carefully.

She thought so.

[Well then... I'll come back someday.]

[Aa, you should go. Even when you have the lifespan of an elf, it is extravagant to explore the world.]

Sent off by Christian, Faldania resumed her journey.

The other side beyond the sea. Another continent.

Faldania's quest was still going on.

-
1. Natto – Nattō is a traditional Japanese food made from soybeans fermented with *Bacillus subtilis* var. natto. Some eat it as a breakfast food. It is served with soy sauce, karashi mustard and Japanese bunching onion.



2. Elf beans – soy beans if it isn't obvious.
3. Yakionigiri – grilled rice balls
4. Miso – a traditional Japanese seasoning produced by fermenting soybeans with salt and koji and sometimes rice, barley, or other ingredients.



5. Onigiri – rice balls
6. Negi – spring onion
7. Dashishoyu – a versatile, umami-rich and slightly sweeter version of soy sauce.

CHAPTER 25

KARUBIDON



Shirley was preparing to leave her room which was located at the deepest part of the Sea Country's palace just before the sun shone in the southern sky.

As the time was before the servant who was in charge of changing her clothing usually came, she changed her clothes on her own.

The clothing she chose was her best cheapest clothing; there was no magical enchantment casted on it by the onmyouji² to protect her body.

The clothes were dyed to be several times poorer in grade than those of the highest grade that only Shirley's family was allowed wear.

The black pearl earrings with similar colouring to her hair that she used normally were put away as those along with her blue eyes that she inherited from her mother that was the former princess of the "Kingdom" until she married into her family were too conspicuous.

She also wore no make-up.

None of those were necessary to wear at her destination, and above all, she did not want to wear them while in “disguise”.

(Ee. This should be enough.)

After she finished changing her clothes, she confirmed her whole body appearance using a mirror of silver plate made by a professional craftsman.

She was a mixed blood of foreign country descent, and there was nothing she could do with her unique beauty that was said to be “siren-like” by the jesters and court poets, but everything else was perfect.

(Aa, now my appearance is just a girl of common descent. Surely no one can tell my true nature.)

She was enchanted by the perfection of her disguise.

The figure was exactly the “commoner girl” that Shirley envisioned.

(Well then, let’s go.)

After completing her preparations, Shirley went out while paying attention to her surroundings so as to avoid being seen by people.

The destination was the flower garden at the palace courtyard.

That place where seasonal flowers bloomed was the “passage” that she aimed for.

A flower garden where a variety of flowers bloomed all year long except during winter with their fragrant scent wafting around the air.

And then Shirley entered into the forest at the corner of the courtyard.

(...As I expected. That fox of a man is attending a banquet today.)

Stepping into the forest, the multiple enchantments that were always hanging over the road were not active at that time and Shirley’s gait became lighter.

The story she heard from a court lady that she befriended who was familiar with court gossips was true.

The court onmyouji, who resembled a fox to her, had left the palace to attend a banquet that was sponsored by the prime minister that day.

When leaving the palace for official affairs and banquets, the onmyouji who was an expert in her country usually released the enchantments which prevented people from approaching “that place” that hung around the road.

...Shirley was waiting for such a day when it overlapped with “Satur’s day”. It only occurred once every few months.

And Shirley finally arrived at her destination.

(... It’s been 3 months.)

A black door with a picture of a cat.

The place that Shirley visited, unknown to the onmyouji’s watchful eyes, while disguising as a commoner.

Remembering “that dish”, she swallowed her saliva, clenched the door handle... and opened the door.

‘Chirinchirin’, Shirley went through the door and stood inside.

[Oya, welcome, long time no see.]

[Ee. Thank you for your time... I’d like to have the usual one.]

She smiled at the owner.

That day, she was given guidance, on the condition of overlooking the crime of entering the palace courtyard without permission, by a travelling, self-proclaimed (awful) poet Halfling with a poor appearance resembling a mouse that took her to visit this place. From the day she came, her favourite food was decided.

[Yes. Please wait a moment... slow down a bit.]

The owner was used to it and retreated to the back.

Yes, this was the otherworld dining hall.

It was a shop that cooked “that dish” that Shirley could not eat at the Sea Country.

(Hehe... as usual it's a lively place.)

While seating on her seating and waiting for her food, she observed the bustle of the restaurant.

The customers of the restaurant were quite diverse.

Their races and births were different and each had their own meal.

And some among them were noble-born like Shirley.

For example, someone she saw once when she was young, eating something that was yellow and soft, a woman with bluish silver hair and light blue eyes, pointed ears of a half-elf, a well-arranged beauty resembling a doll. That was the Witch Princess, the disciple of the Great Sage.

Another example, eating white ice cream that was floating on black coffee and soft cream floating on top of another beautiful, clean green drink, was a man with features similar to one of her father's concubine, copper coloured skin and prominent facial features dressed in flashy clothes of Sand Country's nobles, and eyes resembling black pearls with silky smooth black hair.

And someone that made the man from Sand Country felt anxious, a beautiful lady with pale golden hair and white skin that Shirley had never seen before, eating a flashy dessert in a glass cup decorated like a beautiful masterpiece.

(Fufu~... no one understands.)

Everything they ate were far from the "most delicious cuisine" that Shirley knew.

Feeling secretly superior to that, Shirley waited for her food. And then...

[Sorry I kept you waiting! I have your meal... well, this is the one... right?]

[Yes, there's no mistake.]

She nodded her confirmation to the demon waitress that was newly hired.

The meal on the tray that the waitress brought was what Shirley definitely loved.

The fragrant smell drifted towards her, and Shirley swallowed her saliva without

knowing it.

[Well then, here it is.]

Convinced, the waitress gently put the dish in front of her along with miso soup and iced tea.

The dish used for that food was only 1 big bowl.

It was filled with white rice and brightly coloured vegetables... and roasted meat.

[Aa... how long have I waited. This otherworld “Kalbi Don”.]



Shirley unexpectedly muttered to the meal that she had not seen for 3 months.

Two years had passed since she first ate at the otherworld dining hall after being advertised by the travelling Halfling.

The best treat for Shirley.

That was this “Kalbi Don”.

[Then, please eat it slowly. I’ll bring the dessert after you finish eating.]

The demon waitress hurriedly went back to serve other customers and Shirley started on the rice bowl.

(Lift it first... enjoy the fragrance and appearance.)

On that day, Shirley lifted the bowl according to the trick taught to her by the travelling Halfling on “how to eat the most delicious Kalbi Don”.

The heat slightly warmed Shirley’s palms as she lifted it.

The large bowl weighted a little heavily for Shirley.

This Kalbi Don seduced her.

Plenty of toppings were included and the white rice piled under them could not be seen.

Caryote with vivid orange colour and faint sweet flavor.

Boiled, dark green Ootori grass³.

Clear white and slender bean sprouts.

And the meat with white sesame seeds sprinkled on it that was dyed brown with the meat juice.

She gently breathed in the aroma.

Her nose detected the sweet smell of freshly cooked rice, the fragrant incense of roasted meat, and the sweet and intoxicating scent of the sauce.

On the back of her nose, those 3 scents intermingled... causing her stomach to faintly rumble.

(Aa, no more... I can’t wait any more!)

Shirley began to eat the Kalbi Don following the “way of otherworld” that was viewed as vulgar from the viewpoint of the traditional etiquette of Sea Country.

First of all, pick up the meat that was dripping with its meat juice and nibble it along with the sesame seeds.

(Aa, this taste! I have been dreaming of this taste for so long!)

Spreading over her tongue was the taste of meat gravy along with slightly burned fat.

It was different compared to the meat and fish dishes served at the palace of the Sea

Country, where the “filthiness” contained in them were thoroughly discarded by braising or baking them for a long time. The flavor of the meat overflowed in her mouth.

And enhancing the taste of the meat was the gravy used in the dish.

It contained the sweetness of fruit, spiciness of faint spices, similar to fish sauce but certainly different, saltiness not familiar to Shirley, and the fragrance of oil with something mixed.

The complex juice in which they were all intertwined, if it was eaten separately, the taste would be too strong, but it was compatible with the meat containing plenty of meat juice and fat.

(From here, it’s the real Kalbi Don!)

She wouldn’t be distracted here.

Not just meat. If it was just the meat, the rice bowl wouldn’t be complete.

Shirley started to move at once without hesitation.

To further enjoy her meal, she used her chopstick to lift the meat aside and scooped the rice hidden underneath to her mouth.

(—!)

No words came to her mind.

The flavor of the rice that was sweeter than those that could be found at Sea Country spread in her mouth.

The soft rice that absorbed the meat juice trampled her tongue.

It was the supreme taste that captivated Shirley.

Due to this taste, Shirley transformed into “a growing teenage girl” from “the country’s noble princess”.

It was not just the taste.

While enjoying the sweet smell, the contrast of colorful vegetables with meat and rice, the heat of the bowl transmitted to her palm, and the appetite boiling from her stomach, Shirley slowed down her pace.

She ate the meat and rice while being careful not to stain her clothes.

The beansprout with pleasant chewy texture and the slightly sweet Ootori grass, both lightly seasoned with little salt.

By themselves, they're quite plain... but they served to refresh her palate from the violet combination of meat with rice.

Next, she ate the meat with both the rice and vegetables.

By adding a new taste of vegetables to the finished meat and rice, a different flavor combination was made.

The texture of crunchy vegetables mixed with the juice of gravy and seasoning.

How unbearable.

After eating some of the rice bowl, she sipped the miso soup directly from the bowl.

The taste of the miso soup cleansed her tongue... it renewed her mood to continue eating the Kalbi Don.

She spoke no words for her mouth was occupied with eating.

A contest of dazzling flavours unfolded in her mouth.

Eventually, it ended.

[—Fuu...]

Shirley, who finished eating at more or less the same time as other customers, exhaled a breath of satisfaction while enjoying a cup of iced tea.

The overwhelming feeling remained even after she finished eating.

Unlike any other ordinary meals she had, the weight in her stomach made her happy and satisfied.

(Really, the Kalbi Don is the best dish at otherworld dining hall—)

While thinking so, the waitress came back to her table.

[Ano, I brought your soft cream dessert. Let me take away the empty plate.]

[Very well.]

The empty plate was taken, and on its place was a white, soft and cold dessert.



[...Aa, how sweet...]

Its rich and cold sweetness was perfect for finishing a meal after the heavy Kalbi Don.

Shirley slowly ate spoonful after spoonful of the dessert until none remained.

[Fuu... I'm satisfied.]

Beckoning the waitress, Shirley gently put the money on the table.

Shirley did not use silver coins anywhere else except for this restaurant.

She asked her handmaiden to exchange some coins so that she could get 1 silver coin.

Yes, for her meal of Kalbi Don, tea and dessert, the total price was only 1 silver coin.

(—I wonder if this is normal?)

Every time she asked him, the owner would not take more than 1 silver coin.

A modest price for Shirley.

She thought that it could worth an exceptional price considering the wonderful taste.

[Yes! Thank you very much!]

Looking at the waitress who started to clean the table, Shirley left the restaurant.

—Eat the Kalbi Don, and after finishing it, conclude the meal with the soft cream.

And as soon as she finished her meal, leave immediately.

Following the teachings of the travelling Halfling, Shirley returned to the forest at the palace courtyard.

(...Today, I don't need any lunch...)

She thought so while stroking her full stomach and returned to her room to change her clothing.

It was nearly lunch time, but she did not want to eat any other food.

Even though people would think that her physical condition was declining.

When she had this feeling of fullness, she could say that any other dish was nothing.

Shirley secretly reaffirmed her thoughts.

-
1. Kalbi – Korean BBQ short ribs, usually using beef ribs although pork spare ribs can be used.



2. Onmyouji – Practitioner of Onmyoudo: ‘The Way of Yin and Yang’ that is a traditional Japanese esoteric cosmology, a mixture of natural science and occultism. It is based on the Chinese philosophies of Wu Xing (five elements) and yin and yang, introduced into Japan at the beginning of the 6th century. It was accepted as a practical system of divination.
3. おおとり草 – I don’t know what vegetable this is. I think it’s spinach

CHAPTER 26

ASSORTED COOKIES



It was during her fifth shift ever since Aletta started working at otherworld dining hall.

[For 30 minutes... take a break until the long hand of the clock over there point right above.]

[Yes!]

“Break” time for Aletta was when there were not many customers at the restaurant.

In a small rest room with a simple table and chair, Aletta sat while holding the cup of hot cocoa that the owner made.

[Fuu... delicious.]

The hot cocoa warmed her tired body.

This slightly bitter and very sweet drink was one of Aletta’s favorite foods since she first drank it.

It seemed to be a product of a different world, because she had never seen it sold even in the Capital City which was the most prosperous capital in her world.

It was always enjoyable when it was possible for her to get one of the favorite beverages in this dining room.

[Somehow, I am happy...]

She let out a satisfied sigh.

For the last month or so, feeling that her life was like a dream, Aletta began to change.

After she was hired at the otherworld dining hall, Aletta ceased to wear her hat.

It was great that she was able to gain a lot of money by working at the otherworld dining hall. She was also able to wash her hair and body twice a day during the morning and at night to maintain her “hygiene”. By doing so, her hair became lustrous and it was regrettable to conceal it underneath her hat.

And she found out that it was better for her to work without wearing her hat.

Aletta is a member of the demon tribe. She has a pair of small winding black horns growing from her temple.

When she did not wear her hat to conceal them, it was naturally transmitted to other people that she was a demon.

However, in return, it also became known that she was not a strange girl hiding a secret. As such, her work had proceeded more smoothly than before.

Of course, some people refused to hire her when they found out that she was a demon but the owner did not care. Thanks to that, the trouble the secret could cause decreased before it could escalate.

(It is also nice that I am now a “clean” and well-groomed girl with better hair and clothes than before. But now the trouble I encounter changed considerably, like being hit on by a man during work.)

A remarkable thing happened 3 days ago during the morning.

She was hired to clean, wash and maintain for a small house owned by a treasure hunter.

Some of the valuable magic tools that her employer had found were locked in a room, but the job of managing a house more than anything else, required trust between the employer and employee.

And her employer trusted Aletta on first sight, hired her with eight coins as her pay and provided her a bed. There's only 1 reason.

The employer knew about Aletta...

She was one of the regulars at otherworld dining hall.

After she was hired, Aletta moved from the ruins at the slum to a room for a servant house at the old city. Once every 7 days, she worked at the otherworld dining hall and enjoyed the rest of the days.

And then, she was relaxing a little.

[...This food, is it good...?]

Aletta reached out to it.

A large metal box depicting the sky with clouds and rainbows, with a picture of a white-winged puppy demon in the background.

Aletta gently opened the lid.

Stuffed inside were otherworld biscuits called "cookies".

According to the owner, it was a special sweet that was not served at the otherworld dining hall. He said that it did not fit to be served at a restaurant as it was more appropriate to be sold at a café.

[What shall I do...?]

Aletta was fascinated with the brown cookies.

The owner said that “the cookies at the break room were given as a sample, so you can eat it”.

However, while they looked delicious, Aletta did not have the courage to eat all of the baked sweets alone.

She decided to eat up to five pieces just like the number of her fingers on one hand.

[Okay... I'll eat it.]

After hesitating for a while, Aletta took 5 cookies.

One with a white cream made of butter and sugar was sandwiched between the two pieces of dough that was also made with plenty butter.



Another one was big with roughly crushed nuts called almond and a spice named cinnamon mixed with the dough.



The third had the same colour as cocoa, which was made with something the owner called chocolate, and pieces of dried fruit called banana, which could be found in strange countries that were summer all year long, could also be seen in the mix.



The fourth was beautiful as it had jam made of red berries boiled in sugar water on the middle.



And the last was crispy and brittle with the flavor of tea leaves and butter.



Among 15 different kinds, she carefully selected 5 and gently pulled them from the container.

The cookies were big enough for several bites and she rolled and tasted them inside her mouth.

(...These sweets taste much better than fruits!)

Aletta was obviously pleased with the taste of sweet cookies spreading in her mouth.

While she was eating the cookies, she remembered Hilda the demon mercenary said that “Sweets are much more high-class compared to seasonal fruits in the market”.

Gnawing the cream sandwich cookie, the sweet flavour of butter and cream spread in her mouth.

The cookie with nuts called almonds was fragrant with distinctive nutty flavor.

The dark brown cookie with cocoa mixed in had slightly bitter dough. It complimented the sweet taste of chocolate chips and bananas.

The cookie with red jam was slightly chewy and looked beautiful. Its sweetness and texture complimented each other.

The cookie with tea flavor broke apart easily in her mouth leaving the scent of tea and flavor of butter inside her mouth.

While eating the cookies, Aletta realized that the “sweets” she had never eaten before were very delicious.

Fruits certainly couldn't be compared with them.

That was why Aletta enjoyed her cookies slowly.

It was blissful that she could eat three meals while working at the otherworld dining hall.

At that time, her cheeks loosened and she felt an incomparable happiness.

But it soon ended.

Even though she ate carefully little by little, she decided to only eat 5 cookies.

In a blink of eye, she finished all of her cookies.

[I ate all of them already...]

After that, she sipped her cocoa while observing the metal box.

Inside this large box... there're plenty of cookies left.

There were still 5 other types that Aletta wanted to try.

[...Not good!]

There were still a lot left; surely she could take more... Aletta shook her head.

Once she gave in, she would surely eat all the cookies.

Until she filled her tummy.

Even though the owner gave her permission, it was still awkward.

That's why she needed to be patient.

[...Haa. Let's get back to work.]

The long needle of the clock was nearly pointing to the top so she shook off the crumbs from her clothes.

There was still a little time left, but she couldn't afford to be absent while thinking of the owner that was doing all the cooking and serving.

[Excuse me. Aletta, the break's over. Oh, it's okay to be slower, but well, take this thing to the usual young lady.]

[Okay!]

Taking the fruit parfait from the owner, Aletta replied to the owner.

7 hours later, the sales of otherworld dining hall ended without delay.

[Ano, I finished changing my clothes.]

After finishing her work and taking a shower, Aletta switched her uniform to her washed clothes and reported to the owner.

[Oh, another tiring day. Here, your salary... and a bonus.]

After confirming that she was finished, the owner gave Aletta a brown envelope... and another bag made of thick sky blue paper.

[Ano... what is this?]

Taking the bag, Aletta felt puzzled.

The sky blue coloured bag with words of otherworld and a picture of winged puppy was quite heavy.

She was curious of the content.

[Aa, is there no such custom at the otherworld?]

The owner noticed Aletta's curiosity.

While there were concepts of years and months at the otherworld, for the concept of weeks... there was no such custom of naming the days of a week.

The owner explained one more thing.

[Aletta, you said it during the morning. That you found a good job at the otherworld.]

[E? Hai, that's correct...]

Certainly, she said such a thing that morning.

The owner nodded to the confused Aletta.

[You know, that's a good thing so I'm giving you this as a gift. Not every time though.]

So don't hesitate to take it. I'm sorry for such a makeshift gift.]

[Ah, hai. Thank you very much... eh this!?!]

Aletta peered inside the bag given to her and raised a surprised voice.

What was inside was something Aletta wanted.

The owner laughed at Aletta's reaction.

[It seemed that you were quite shy while eating it at the break room. Cookies, you don't dislike them right?]

He had hired Aletta for a month and in that time, he had gotten to know her.

For example, he knew that Aletta liked to eat cookies little by little every break time.

It was a humility trait that he wanted his other weekday staffs that could finish the biggest can of cookies in three days to emulate.

[Ha, hai. But, isn't this pretty expensive?]

The paper bag was familiar as it had the same winged puppy picture on it like the one on the metal box of cookies.

It was smaller than the one at the break room, but from the weight, there must be a considerable amount of "cookies" inside.

[A... well, it's certainly expensive. But it's a gift.]

The owner nodded to Aletta's question.

According to his childhood friend who made those, the assortment of cookies was sold at department stores and wedding venues ever since the previous generation of the Flying Puppy.

—This was because the cookies could not be mass produced. Their taste was worth the price though.

It was the valve to say.

[Such a thing... are you sure I can take it?]

Not only did the owner pay her 10 silver coins, he also gave her such a luxurious item.

She could attest to the taste.

Feeling that, she trembled a little.

[Aa, of course. You could buy it if you like, but this one is a gift from me. Don't be afraid to eat it. You're the only staff on Saturdays, so don't be shy.]

The owner strongly answered her.

In the past month, Aletta worked diligently.

Although he understood that she was unfamiliar with servicing customers, she had the "strength" to do so.

According from what he managed to gleam from her, she was living in poverty at the otherworld. This was something nice that he could give.

From his heart, the owner wanted to give the cookies to her.

[That, thank you very much. This is important... I'll enjoy it.]

Aletta thanked the owner.

[Oh, no need to be shy. The cookies can last for 3 months if you haven't open the box, but after opening it, make sure to finish it within half a month. A, the silica gel at the bottom... you can't eat the transparent grains, so be careful.]

The owner answered with a wry smile.

Thus Aletta obtained "different world cookies".

...Without knowing that it would trigger a new encounter.

In front of a house at the corner of the Capital was a small, splendidly constructed horse-drawn carriage.

[We have arrived, my lady.]

The butler who was in charge said to the lady sitting inside the carriage.

[Indeed. Thank you. I'll be back after a while, come back and pick me up then.]

The young lady ordered the butler.

[Yes, as you wish, my lady.]

When she came to this house... to see her family, the butler who served the Gold family accompanied her and was accustomed to this. The young lady stepped off the carriage and it went away.

[Well... nee-san, I hope you're doing fine.]

As soon as she stepped of the carriage and patted her dress, she faced the house in front of her.

It was one of her family's houses at the Capital where her elder sister lived after she said to her parents that she wanted to live on her own.

Her older sister that was afflicted with a troublesome "fever"... that was Sarah.

The "fever" that affected Sarah who was five years older than Shia... was the disease her family called "The Curse of William".

That curse of William... was the longing for adventure.

For the four generations ever since the first generation of Gold family, some people in each generations were afflicted with this troublesome fever and became treasure hunters and adventurers.

Rather than living a peaceful life in the Kingdom, they prefer exploring ancient ruins and monsters' nests alone or with dubious people...

Eventually, they would most certainly lose their life.

Such a terrible disease.

Of course, it would be necessary for them if it was Richard who was the second generation of William and his son, and as they were not yet rich.

The main income of the Gold family at that time was valuable magical items that they found and sold.

But times had changed.

The adventurers and treasure hunters at the Capital now came to the company that the Gold family founded to do business for magical items as they were known to be trusted for a long time and would not deceive them.

The company bought the items by making full use of appraisal techniques that were honed over the years of experience, and sold them to knights, mercenaries and top adventurers.

Or contracting magicians to make simple magic goods to sell to adventurers and nobilities.

The Gold Company was now able to make more than enough money.

There's no need for the family members to bother to go searching for treasures at dangerous ruins by themselves.

Treasure hunting was a dangerous occupation.

Only the first generation William and his son Richard were able to retire safely after a successful treasure hunting career.

...Ironically, in a sense, that all but two of them who went out for adventuring were killed accidents and monsters.

For Shia, William's curse was not something she would be concerned of.

Her uncle who was her mother's brother was eaten by a monster before she and Sarah were born.

An older cousin went to the ruins and his dead body had never been found.

And now Sarah became a treasure hunter after throwing away a life without

inconvenience. There was no way she would be delighted.

In such circumstances, she went to check on her sister whenever she was back at the Capital to see whether she was fine or not.

[Eto, sorry, Sarah is currently out.]

...There were days like this.

It was a girl that she had never seen before that responded to her.

[Eto... You are Shia, right? Nice to meet you. My name is Aletta. Sarah employed me as a housekeeper.]

It seemed that she managed to identify Shia as she resembled a young Sarah.

That girl... Aletta introduced herself politely.

What she was wearing was not the servant's uniform of the Gold family, but her own personal clothes. It was worn out, but not dirty.

Seeing the black horns growing from her temple, there was no doubt that she was a demon kin that was more common as adventurers, mercenaries and treasure hunters.

That Aletta was surprised by the visit of her employer's family.

[...Anyway, can I wait inside?]

[A, hai! Please do!]

Seeing as Aletta consented, Shia went inside the house.

Inside a humble drawing room, she sat down on a chair with soft cushions and waited for Sarah.

[A, I brought you tea!]

Aletta who looked withdrawn as she was not familiar with Shia said so.

[...I wonder why nee-san hired a girl of demon kin.]

Observing Aletta, Shia wondered inside her heart.

It was the “norm” not to hire a demon servant.

Being a daughter of Gold family who bought and sold magical items with adventurers, she was not afraid of demons, but even so.

Many demons that lived a terrible life often had bad habits and rough behaviors.

If they were mercenaries, adventurers or magicians who had money then it's not so bad, but Aletta's fighting capabilities seemed to be poor.

The phrase “poverty is the root of evil” was well-known at Shia's world.

[I wonder why nee-san hired her.]

She muttered to herself and arranged her thoughts.

Her sister who was afflicted with the curse of William left their home three years ago.

While the blood relation was far, she had talent, as such in three years she managed to change from a naïve young girl to a full-fledged treasure hunter.

And Sarah's eyes that could discern a person had become even more polished compared to when she was just a daughter of a merchant family.

If her sister would vouch for her, it seemed that Aletta was worthy of credit.

...The question was how she would know it.

[Sorry I made you wait.]

While thinking such, Aletta came back.

A cup of tea was placed on a tray that she carried and...

[...Is that baked confectioneries?]

She looked at the baked dessert placed on a coarse wooden dish and tilted her head.



Baked confectioneries were unusual for her sister who lived a simple life with only her own earnings.

It was the first time that anything other than tea was served at this house when she came to visit.

[Yes. They're cookies; I say that they're kind of special.]

For the last five days she had been eating these “special” sweets whenever she wanted, and Aletta decided to serve the last five cookies to the guest while pasting a “service smile”.

[Here you are. The tea is hack tea¹.]

She put the tray of cookies and hot tea with refreshing flavor on the table.

Her behavior was the way the owner taught her at the restaurant.

[Yes, thank you.]

Honestly, there was no honey or sugar. Hack tea had a strong flavor so she disliked it, but it would be rude to not drink it.

As a daughter of a merchant family, Shia was raised to be polite so as to not make enemies, so she sipped the tea.

The flavor that hit her tongue was what she expected, a little spicy.

(I do not dislike the flavor by itself...)

The tea had a faint sweetness so she did not dislike it.

While thinking so, she looked at the baked sweets.

(...She said that they're confectionaries, I wonder if they taste sweet.)

It seemed to be made of wheat, with tan and dark brown colours.

There were only five of them.

(Each of them seemed to be different... pretty fancy.)

Shia tasted the baked sweets called "cookies".

The first one was shaped like a leaf with white sugar on the surface.



The second was thin and pale yellow with something dark brown sandwiched in between.



Third was vivid orange at the center.



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Fourth contained raisins and was shaped like a dog with wings. ²



And the last had a black and white check pattern.



They were more brilliant and beautiful than any ordinary baked confectioneries.

If they taste amazing, it would befit to be served to nobles.

(So, the taste is...)

She had high expectations for the beautiful sweets and took the leaf-shaped one.

Then she carried it to her mouth that still had the lingering taste of the tea.

(E!?)

Her eyes became wide open due to astonishment.

It was not as sweet as she thought; it contained the savory flavor of butter along with sweetness of baked wheat.

To be honest, the desserts served to nobles were sweeter.

But, Shia asserted in her mind.

(...This is incredible.)

She was surprised by its texture.

The thin sugar surface was crispy while the cookie itself was chewy. The cookie crumbled in her mouth with no resistance.

Mixing with the crushed sugar was the flavor of butter and wheat.

She then drank the hack tea and pondered.

(...Is that all of it?)

She then gazed at the rest of the cookies.

Only 4 cookies left.

...Did all of them taste the same as the first one?

She then took another one.

(Is this really baked? The colour is very pale, but... what is this dark brown layer?)

The next one was yellow with dark brown sandwiched in between.

Honestly, she could not imagine the flavor of the dark brown part.

Feeling a mix of anxiety and expectation, she bit it and was surprised by the taste.

(What's this!? The outer part and inner layer fit perfectly!)

Yes, the yellow cookie was crispy and brittle with strong but sweet flavor of butter and milk, but the dark brown part was sweet and bitter.

The two confections which could become a leading role even by itself complimented each other.

(Thi, this one... it's also wonderful!)

She looked at the rest with excitement... impatient to taste them.

(Just as I thought!)

Her premonition was not wrong.

The one with orange center was Michele³ boiled in sugar water.

By doing so, a fresh, sweet and sour flavor was made.

Furthermore, by including the zest, its scent became even more pronounced.

Raisins were mixed in a well-made winged puppy shaped cookie

It's not just raisins; it's also mixed with plenty of strong liquor with rich scent.

The sweet raisins contained peculiar sweetness similar to alcohol.

It harmonized well with the cookie and became a wonderful taste.

And last, the confectionary with black and white checker pattern.

This one also showed a good workmanship.

Unlike other sweets, there's no decoration.

The dough was chewier and the black part had a distinctive sweet and bitter taste.

After she finished the cookies, she resumed to drink her tea.

The hack tea no longer had the distinct sweet spiciness.

It was refreshing in her mouth after eating the sweet confectionaries.

[It was delicious...]

She muttered at the end.

Even if it's wrong, they were not normal desserts.

They had wonderful sweetness that was even better than "high class sweets" which, despite their extravagant appearances, merely increased the amount of sugar used.

[You, this, where did you get it!? Or did nee-san buy it!?]

Unexpectedly, Shia asked Aletta.

The cookies were not something a normal person could get, let alone a demon kin.

She could only think that they're made by a skilled chef, more than the elite chefs of Alfade firm who handled all kind of ingredients and boasted skills similar to the imperial chefs.

[E!? That...]

Aletta did not elaborate.

Shia did not know the otherworld dining hall, and Sarah told Aletta to keep the otherworld dining hall as a secret.

It was difficult for her to answer.

[...You do not want to say it. I understand.]

Shia understood that there was a circumstance that prevented Aletta to say it.

There was no doubt that a fuss would be raised if people knew such confectionary.

If the place of the shop was known, the aristocrats and rich people who loved sweets would crowd the shop.

A merchant would be happy, but some craftsmen hate such customers.

If the cookies were the work of a craftsman, Aletta's reaction was not out of norm.

[Well, I change my question... can I get them again?]

She asked Aletta again.

[E, etto... maybe. But I think it's extremely expensive. A lot of cookies were packed inside a beautiful metal box.]

Aletta said as her hand showed an estimate of the size of the box.

At that time, the owner said that "if you like it, you can buy it", so she concluded that the cookies could be bought.

However, he also said that "it's pretty expensive".

If it's "pretty expensive" by the owner's standard, then to Aletta's standard it would be "extremely expensive".

[Is that so? Just show me the box.]

Shia was interested by Aletta's words and ordered her.

[Yes, please wait a moment.]

Aletta nodded, retreated to the back, and came back with the box.

A sky blue, metal box.

[Here... the cookies I gave you were the last ones...]

She blushed and put down the box in front of Shia.

[Indeed... this would certainly be expensive.]

Shia opened the box and felt a bit disappointed that it was empty. She then quickly calculated the amount of cookies that could be contained inside and sighed at the result.

Originally, sweets were expensive.

The five "high quality sweets" that she was served could amount to two silver coins.

Although the amount of sugar used was restrained, they were made with wonderful technology and ingenuity, and the quality of the ingredients used were all first-class.

It was not strange if the value was 2 to 3 times the norm.

Especially as they were sold in a beautiful metal box like that.

[...Yoshi.]

Digesting the information given, Shia decided.

She casually took out her wallet and retrieved one coin.

[When you can, can you get the same cookies with this?]

She then gently gave it to Aletta.

[E!? But, but this is a gold coin...]

Holding the gold coin, Aletta exclaimed in surprise.

Gold coin.

It was only recently that she saw it for the first time.

One of the regulars of the otherworld dining hall who happened to be a magical being that always bought a huge pot full of soup always gave it to the owner as payment.

It's worth a ridiculous amount, especially since two plates of the soup were worth of one piece of silver coin.

[That's right. That's my bill for the month, so don't lose it. Though I don't think it would sum up to 1 gold coin... In my view, it would cost around 40 to 50 silver coins per box. So, I will hand it over to you. One gold coin is 100 silver coins. I'll get the change later, but I will give you a reward, so be relieved.]

She instantly decided at that moment.

Just like that, she was the same as her sister.

Even though Aletta was a demon, she was a servant that her sister trusted.

She would not mistrust her.

[I understand...]

Aletta unexpectedly accepted the gold coin and nodded.

[Really, I'm begging you.]

Shia stared straight at Aletta and said.

[Ara, if it isn't Shia. What's wrong? Holding the hand of my servant.]

At that time, Sarah who was her original purpose, came into the room.

It was such a shock.

At a later date, she was further shocked by the amount and types of cookies that could be bought by the money.

There was no impossibility.

Aletta got 10 pieces of silver coins.

Two pieces of the silver coins were of larger size.

In that otherworld, it was sold at a price that Aletta could afford.

Thus, a new fan of Flying Puppy that could be said as a part of otherworld dining hall was born.

...Even though the person who made it did not know.

-
1. Hack tea – I don't know what kind of tea this is. Tried searching and found nothing. I think it's an other world tea.
 2. I doubt there's any raisin cookies that has a winged dog shape so I just put a picture of a normal raisin cookie.
 3. Michele – Orange

CHAPTER 27

HAM CUTLET



At a corner of a house made of logs in the bedroom of a married couple, Ellen wore her best clothes for the first time in a month and was preparing to go out.

(Alright, this is it. I can't make it better anymore.)

Since there was no mirror in the room, Ellen merely brushed her dark brown hair and checked her clothes for any disorder.

What she was wearing was not her usual ragged clothing with worn-out hem but clothes that were usually worn for festivals or weddings.

Pierced on her ear was a dull silver earring with a tiny jewel the size of a pinky fingernail that her mother told her to sell if she had monetary problem.

As she could not afford high class cosmetics that were sold at shops, she made her own cosmetics using spring flowers. She applied red lipstick on her lips and lightly dusted face powder on her cheeks.

The place to go now... In her 30 years, there were women who were younger, more beautiful and higher status than Ellen that visited that place. She felt insecure as she could not afford anything expensive as a poor woodcutter's wife.

Ellen convinced herself and left the bedroom.

[Thank you for waiting. What do you think? Does it suit me?]

Her family who waited in front of the room... she approached her husband and children who were also neatly dressed.

[Oh, looks good. Well then, let's go now. The children can't wait anymore.]

[That's right! Let's go now Kaa-chan!]

[I'm hungry! Let's go!]

But reality was tough.

Her husband, Hermann, was slightly older than her and had a beefy body. Her children, the 11 years old Kai who resembled her husband and the 8 years old Bona who resembled her, ran out of the house.

[...Yes, I know. Just calm down now.]

[[Ye~s!]]

Whether they understood or not, they replied energetically.

[Well, shall we?]

[Ou.]

After she asked Hermann, the 4 of them went out.

...To the barn that was only 3 minutes away by foot.

[Well then, let's open it.]

In the barn that only had one donkey to carry the wood, while being watched by the other three people... Hermann opened the black door with a picture of a cat.

"Chirinchirin", the door opened as normal.

[Welcome, Hermann, Ellen.]

Looking at it, more than 10 years ago, the two lovers started to visit since before they were married and the previous owner was still alive.

[The usual?]

The owner asked.

Due to their long acquaintanceship, the owner knew that Hermann and Ellen could not read the menu, so he didn't give it to them.

Also, the order for that family had been decided for the last few years.

That's why he was only confirming it.

[Ou, as usual. Give us a daily set meal for 4... well, what's the daily set today?]

Sure enough, Hermann ordered that dish.

Daily set meal.

It was a menu that changed every time they came, and it was a special order, about two copper coins cheaper than any other food in the menu.

[Today's ham cutlet. I think it would pair well with bread.]

In response to Hermann's question, the owner replied.

He did not think that the compatibility with rice was bad, he just thought that it would fit bread better.

[Is that so? It's bread today then. As usual, give us bread and soup first.]

Hermann then placed his order as usual.

[Yes, I understand. Please wait a moment.]

The owner retreated to the kitchen after taking the order.

[Well then, let's find a seat...]

Then Hermann looked inside the restaurant to find an empty table.

[Oh, that one's empty. Let's sit there.]

[Aa.] [Ha~i.]

Following Hermann, the whole family went to that table and took a seat.

[Na, Kaa-chan! I want ice cream! Can I have ice cream?]

[I want cola! The black one with “shushu” sound!]

After they sat down, the children were filled with glee due to the once a month luxury.

Kai wanted a drink that became his favourite after a teen let him had a taste at the restaurant while Bona wanted the cold and sweet dessert that could only be eaten at the restaurant.

[No, be patient. We can't afford that much. Ne, tou-chan?]

However, Ellen's body while holding the purse string was stiff.

While they could not read and calculate, Ellen who maintained a firm grasp on their money asked for Hermann's consent.

[Na, Kaa-chan, I also want beer, can we?]

[...You know, you should nod at this situation.]

Really, the reality was ruthless.

Even though he knew the circumstances of the household, Hermann wanted the otherworld alcohol that resembled ale.

[A, tou-chan, not fair! I want ice cream too!]

[I want cola!]

[Na, can we? I'll increase the amount of firewood I cut tomorrow, I promise.]

Hermann and their children ganged up on Ellen.

Ellen heaved a sigh and said,

[...Ice cream or cola, pick either one. You can't have them both. Anyway, whenever you order them, you always want another one. And I'll have a bottle of beer, I also want to drink.]

[Ou!]

[[Yatta!]]

They exclaimed in delight.

Then, the kids debated whether to pick ice cream or cola and eventually decided on cola.

[Sorry to keep you waiting! I brought your bread and soup.]

A newly hired waitress with unusual black hair ornaments placed their order on the table.

[Aa, sorry to trouble you, but I want to order an additional bottle of beer and two colas.]

[Yes! Thank you very much! I'll bring them with your order of ham cutlets.]

Responding to the additional order, the waitress retreated to the back.

[Well, let's eat... Hermann, eyes on me okay?]

[O, Ou.]

She decided to eat after reprimanding Hermann who was staring at the waitress' butt.

(Aa, it smells nice...)

Bread and soup.



In the otherworld, if they order the main course, they could ask for free refills of bread and soup.

The bread was even better than the white bread that Ellen usually ate during the festivals.

A long time ago, before they were married... when Hermann accidentally found the door and invited Ellen, she would eat a sweet dessert, but now she prefer the bread and soup that came with the daily set.

They were excellent food.

Two breads were placed on a white plate, warm as if it's freshly baked. She then tore them.

The dark brown lustrous exterior was torn apart and the pure white interior was revealed.

She cut the butter that was also placed on the plate, spread it on the bread, and brought the bread to her mouth.

(...Aa, how sweet.)

The first bite of bread with plenty butter.

The taste of thin and crisp crust along with the sweet taste of the white interior spread in her mouth. The fragrance of baked bread with butter tickled her nose.

The taste was delicious. Soon, the bread disappeared into her stomach.

She then reached for the soup.

The soup was pale coloured with chopped vegetables and smoked meat.

She scooped it with a spoon and brought it to her mouth.

(Aa, the food here is really delicious.)

Her tongue could taste the flavors of salt, vegetables and smoked meat and some other flavors that she could not discern.

The soup served at otherworld dining hall changed every time they came, all of them were delicious.

This time was no exception.

Then Ellen proceeded to eat the soup with the bread.

She took a bite of the bread and drank a mouthful of soup.

Repeating the actions.

Hermann and her children also ate the same way.

—Aa, she's eating delicious food.

They felt fulfillment after finishing their bread and soup.

[Sorry to keep you waiting! Here's your order!]

The previous waitress carefully carried their food and drinks along with additional bread and soup.

[Aa, thanks.]

Thanking the waitress, Ellen looked at the highlight of their meal.

Four disk shape fried food with wheat covering, a heap of pale green leafy vegetable, three round red fruits (TN: cherry tomatoes), and yellow mayonnaise on the corner.



Today's daily dish "Ham Cutlet" was also delicious.

[Saa, I'll eat a lot today!]

Hermann poured the beer into a clear glass cup from its brown bottle. He also took a blue bottle and poured the content onto his plate.



[Here, you too Kaa-chan.]

[Aa, thanks.]

Ellen received the bottle of beer and the blue bottle. She then started to eat.

First, a little bit of sauce. Hermann liked to use a lot but she preferred to use it moderately.

She thought it was delicious because of its crisp coating.

She cut the Ham Cutlet into bite-sized pieces using her knife.

Peeping from the cross section were the pink smoked meat and melted cheese.



(Apparently there seems to be two kinds. Not just meat.)

While thinking such, she pierced a piece with no cheese using her fork.

She then carried it into her mouth, the smell of fragrant oil and sauce tickled her nose.

[N~!]

Her voice leaked unintentionally due to the taste.

After a crunching noise while her teeth chewed the piece, the taste of smoked meat, salt, herb and spice suddenly spread in her mouth.

Just the Ham Cutlet by itself, the taste was already unbearable. Combined with the sweet and sour sauce, the taste became even more delicious.

[Tasty~!] [Delicious~!]

The children cheered while eating their meal.

[...Puha~! The combination of beer and fried food is unbearable!]

Hermann exclaimed after eating his Ham Cutlet with plentiful sauce and a cup of beer.

All 4 of them thought that their food was delicious.

This daily set of Ham Cutlet.

(Aa... cheese is also delicious! In this case...)

Ellen chewed on a piece of Ham Cutlet with cheese inside. She enjoyed the astounding combination of piping hot melted cheese and smoked meat. While the taste still lingered in her mouth, she gulped her chilled beer.

Yes, not just limited to Ham Cutlet. There was another important way to enjoy deep fried food.

First of all, cut the bread horizontally with a knife.

Stuff the Ham Cutlet and the leafy vegetables into the slit. Pour the mayonnaise and the sauce on top.

And eat the “Ham Cutlet Sandwich” as it is.



(As expected! I can’t stop eating this in this restaurant!)

Ellen cheered internally while stuffing her mouth full.

Sweet and soft bread with smooth surface, piping hot deep-fried meat, and fresh leafy vegetable.

When these were mixed together, it was like another dish.

And, she was able to eat plenty of good bread.

“How to eat delicious deep-fried food” as taught by the previous owner.

After she heard it, whenever the daily set was a deep-fried food, she always ate it this way.

She would never be tired of it.

Looking at it, the other three also enjoyed their Ham Cutlet Sandwich in different ways.

Hermann’s was full of sauce.

Kai did not use any sauce and only used the mayonnaise for the cutlet.

Bonna’s contained a lot of vegetables and only cheese.

The family of 4 people had different ways of “how to enjoy what you think is most delicious”.

[Aaah~! This sauce is really delicious!]

[It should be meat after all! Cheese is also delicious but it has to be meat!]

[Onii-chan! Well, if it was me, cheese is more important!]

Although there was no doubt that everyone was happy.

They ate the free-flow bread and soup until night.

[[[[Fu~]]]]

After stuffing their stomach full, the family of four sighed contentedly.

[Excuse me, bill please.]

They would be back soon.

While thinking so, Ellen took out her wallet and called the waitress.

[Okay. Please wait a moment.]

Then the owner came out.

It seemed that the waitress was unable to account gold yet.

[Well then, as usual please.]

Ellen softly handed the wallet to the owner.

She would not do it if the other party was an ordinary merchant, but she had known the owner for a long time so she trusted the owner not to take more money than needed.

[Yes.]

The owner took 1 silver coin and 20 copper coins from the wallet... the exact amount of the bill and handed the wallet back to Ellen.

[Thank you for your patronage. Come again.]

[Aa, we'll come again... let's go everyone.]

Pocketing her lighter wallet, she urged the other three.

They went through the door and stepped into their barn.

[Today's food was delicious, right, tou-chan.]

[Isn't it. A~a, our next visit is next month... I'll earn more money in the meantime.]

[When I become an adult, I want to marry a rich guy so that I can go there every day!]

[Well, anyhow, that store only appeared once every 7 days.]

They went back to their house while cheerfully talking about how delicious that day's meal was.

[Well, when we get home, take off your clothes before they get dirty.]

[[[Okay.]]]

Following Ellen's instructions, they changed back to their usual clothes.

[Well then, I'll chop some firewood. You too, Kai.]

[Ou.]

[Bonna, next morning, you'll be with Kaa-chan. Understand?]

[Okay.]

She finished changing her clothes and continued her work.

Thus, their once a month luxury ended and they continued their daily life.

Also, they looked forward to their next visit.

CHAPTER 28

TONJIRU



That day was “meat day”.

Meat day.

It was one of the service days for Western Cathouse that was enacted once per month.

During the time of the previous owner when the Cathouse became “otherworld dining hall”, “meat day” was a special service.

Despite the name, it did not mean that there was a discount on meat dishes.

“The service of the restaurant was cooking, not money” was the opinion of the previous owner. The current owner also agreed to it.

So the owner went to the kitchen earlier than usual to cook the beef stew and prepare for the meat day.

[...Okay, this is it.]

Looking at the sizzling pork, the owner nodded at the fragrant smell and shade of colour.

He added the vegetables that he prepared and chopped before.

Carrot, onion, taro, radish... as usual, burdock was not added as it was not popular with Saturday's customers.

He added bonito and kelp into the pork soup and left the soup to boil.

He skimmed the soup and turned off the fire... he then added miso and put it on heater so that it did not cool down.

[I have to go up.]

After he finished stirring, he gently placed the lid on the pot and sighed.

The sound of bell that he was waiting for rang.

[Good morning!]

Aletta cheerfully laughed and greeted the owner.

[Ou. Eat your breakfast before you take a shower. I just cooked the rice.]

[Waa, thank you very much.]

Listening to the owner, a smile bloomed on Aletta's face.

Aletta had not eaten anything yet before coming.

...Her stomach was really empty.

[Wait a moment then. I'll prepare it soon.]

Smiling wryly at Aletta, the owner prepared coffee along with that day's special menu.

Along with white rice was salt-grilled salmon using yesterday's remaining salmon.



He placed down the bowls in front of himself and Aletta. He then started on the final preparation.

A small piece of butter and freshly chopped onions.

In the old days, this way of eating was adopted after hearing it from a customer from Hokkaido. If combined, the taste became like “Western food”.

[Sorry to keep you waiting. Please put the shichimi¹ as much as you like.]

The butter melted in the soup and its fragrance wafted from the soup.

[Such a nice scent... isn't this miso soup?]

The scent made her feel hungrier and Aletta's eyes became glued to the soup in front of her.

The miso soup had a unique flavor.

It was roughly similar with eating rice during the meal.

However, this soup was somewhat different from the usual miso soup that Aletta was familiar with.

[There's a lot of ingredients... even meat is included.]

Yes, the miso soup cooked by the owner was different every time, but normally there was no meat included in the soup.

But this time it was luxurious with plenty of vegetables and meat.



... To be honest, it could be called another kind of dish.

[Oh, today is “meat day”.]

The owner answered seeing Aletta’s confusion.

[Since a long time ago, it was decided to cook Tonjiru in place of the usual miso soup during “meat day.”]

Menu that was offered during this day was not available normally.

That was the meat service during meat day.

Then, after a while.

On that day, Sara who was Aletta’s other employer... and called “Minced Cutlet”, visited the otherworld dining hall for the first time after about 20 days.

[Oh, so today’s soup is very tasty.]

[Yes! It's very delicious. A lot of meat and vegetables were added...]

Sara inquired about today's menu and Aletta nodded.

That day's soup was exceptional. Honestly, it could be included in the normal menu.

[Very well. I want rice and Tonjiru today.

Also, I want to order Minced Cutlet and Minced Cutlet Sandwich.]



Sarah who was interested after listening, ordered it.

Usually, she ordered bread, but with miso soup, it was better with rice.

[Yes! Thank you for your order!]

[What!? Today's soup was replaced with Tonjiru!?]

As she received the order, Aletta heard that voice from the next table.

[N? Do you know something, Fried Shrimp?]

The owner of the voice... Sarah asked the knight-like "Fried Shrimp" that she became a little acquainted with after the "Sandwich Incident".

[Aa, Tatsugo... I have heard about it before from Teriyaki. The phantom soup that was Tonjiru that could only be ordered during meat day.]

Heinrich, the knight of Principality... that was called "Fried Shrimp" nodded and told Minced Cutlet the story he heard from the respected swordsman.

Tonjiru could only be ordered during "meat day" that was only held once or twice a year, it was a phantom soup.

It was an exceptional dish that was similar to miso soup as it also used miso. It also had many fans since a long time ago.

However, it was not easy to know when the "meat day" was, so he heard it was quite difficult to be able to order Tonjiru.

[Young lady! I also want to order rice and soup! Of course the order is Fried Shrimp. I also want to take away Fried Shrimp Sandwich!]



With the story finished, Heinrich ordered his usual menu.

[Yes! Please wait for a while.]

After receiving the two orders, Aletta retreated back to the kitchen.

After a while, Aletta returned with their ordered food.

[Sorry to keep you waiting! Your orders of Minced Cutlet and Fried Shrimp. And Tonjiru soup. Please note that the red flakes is spicy so please be careful.]

To the usual customer their usual orders.

Sizzling, freshly fried Minced Cutlet and Fried Shrimp.

And Tonjiru soup that was that day's special menu.

((It looks delicious as usual...))

While watching the hot fried food in front of them, they started on the Tonjiru first.

(...I see. This is a pretty gorgeous soup.)

With the soup in mind, Sarah found that Aletta's words were true.

Stewed in the soup with constant temperature were soft vegetables and meat that were floating in the soup.

There was flavor of miso as usual along with the taste of butter that softened it.

(It tastes a bit similar to knight's soup.)

Tasting it, Sarah was reminded a little of the Kingdom that was her home country.

A stew using Knight's sauce was made shortly before Sarah was born and it quickly became a famous specialty of the Kingdom.

Along with plenty meat and vegetables, the flavor of butter was its characteristic taste.

When she was at her parent's house, she ate good food. But since she became a treasure hunter, she couldn't afford much.

(Ho. This is Togaran²... it's a nice taste.)

Heinrich was also reminded of his hometown while eating the soup.

His hometown was a port town.

Togaran was not native in the Principality. As it was imported from the country at the other side of the sea, it had considerable price, but Heinrich who came from a noble family could afford it.

Since Togaran made the soup spicy, he disliked it as a child. But it became his favourite after he became an adult.

(It has been three years since I last went back...)

Suddenly, he remembered that.

Last time, he went back to report to his parents that he was entrusted with one of the teams of the Order of Principality.

After that, he got a long vacation, but due to the distance, he did not return to his hometown.

((...After a long absence, I suddenly want to go home...))

Sarah and Heinrich. Even though these two had different characters, they suddenly thought the same thing at the same time.

[Ah!? What is this soup!?!]

On that day, Yuuto “Pork Ginger” who visited the otherworld dining hall with his mentor, exclaimed in surprise.

Before coming, he visited the store with Taro his dog to wash away the mud. He then ordered for pork ginger as usual and devoured the meat dish.

Up to that point was normal.

But that day was different.

[Normally, there’s no meat in the soup. What do you think, master?]

The soup was filled with meat and vegetables.

The meat was well braised and the vegetables were piping hot.

And the juice of the differently seasoned meat was overflowing every time he chewed.

Among all the ingredients, the raw onions that were added afterwards stood out.

Anyhow, it tasted good and was different from the usual soup.

[It's meat day today.]

Yuuto's master said while eating the Pork Ginger and Tonjiru. He was also stroking his own pet dog that was more trained than Taro.



It was meat day.

Even though the Tonjiru was full of vegetables and meat, it was free to reorder as usual.

Yuuto's master was also lucky enough to come across it before.

[It's free to reorder...]

[Ou, we can eat plenty of Tonjiru today only.]

He nodded back to Yuuto and went back to eating.

Yuuto also learned from it.

After that, the two of them ate more rice and Tonjiru than usual.

[Haha, today's meat day?]

A former general “Curry Rice” Alphonse, who was aware of the restaurant’s regulars especially those that were partial to rice, caught the situation.

He knew the soup. Anyway, he had been a customer for 20 years.

Of course he ate Tonjiru many times before.

[For my order, curry rice as usual. But can you give me rice and a bowl of Tonjiru before curry rice? A little bit more butter please.]



Before curry rice, he always had a bowl of Tonjiru with rice. He then continued with curry rice and Tonjiru.

That was how Alphonse ate during “meat day”.

[Yes! I understand!]

[Ou, young lady! I want the same as him!]

The moment Aletta received the order, a loud voice said that to her.

Next to Alphonse, one man sat wildly in a momentum that could break a chair.

He was a man with abnormal body.

From neck up, that man had a lion head with a beastly mane. He was carrying a huge steel sword on his back and his thin clothes showed his muscular body that was covered with scars.

[My order is Katsudon! But before that bring me plenty of rice and Tonjiru!]



[Ye, yes!]

Aletta nodded to the unfamiliar demonic customer before retreating back to the kitchen.

[Oh, it's been a long time. Since I didn't see you anywhere, I was wondering if you had died at last.]

That man... "Katsudon" Lionel spoke with a smile that only looked threatening to Alphonse.

For many years, as a man that killed many people as a magic gladiator, it was everyday scenery that "people die".

[Do not be foolish. I can't die easily now.]

It was scene that would make ordinary people cringe, but Alphonse was a seasoned general and had a nonchalant face.

In the old days, he argued which rice dishes were more delicious with Teriyaki and Omelet Rice.

Their connection was that restaurant only, but they could be said as casual friends.

[I just came home. Thanks to that, it took me a long time to find a door.]

While thinking such, Alphonse explained the circumstances.

[Oo! You returned! That's good news!]

Lionel gladly said in reply.

He was ruthless and cruel while fighting in the arena, but he was usually refreshing and passionate.

Lionel was such a man.

[So you live in a city now?]

[Aa, it's somewhat boring, but it's better than living in an island.]

They discussed with each other lightly.

[Ano, sorry to keep you waiting! I brought your rice and Tonjiru first!]

After waiting for a while, their rice and Tonjiru came.

[Ou! I've been waiting!]

[Aa, I'm sorry.]

Thanking Aletta, they received their rice and Tonjiru.

[Well then...] [Let's eat.]

They began to eat their respective food.

(Yes, butter and Togaran pairs well.)

Alphonse who began to eat after pouring plenty of Togaran was soon satisfied with the taste of his Tonjiru.

His body was warmed by the soup and the spiciness of the Togaran complimented the aftertaste.

And while the taste was still lingering in the mouth, he started on the rice.

This way of eating was taught by the previous owner, it tasted delicious to eat the rice after drinking the soup.

(...Umu, I wonder if the rest of my order is ready.)

He had finished two bowls but he was still hungry.

Alphonse waited impatiently.

[...]

In contrast to Alphonse who took his time eating, Lionel inhaled his food.

He ate quickly and waited for his favourite food to come.

(Chi~i... this smell.)

In truth, he intended to eat more Tonjiru after a long time.

However, the fat of the meat and vegetables were firmly mixed, the scent was also mixed with the fragrant scent of miso and butter.

The soup disappeared in a blink of eye, and he was hungry for more.

[Kuso... when I eat only a little, I got hungrier.]

Due to the scent of pork meat, he was reminded of the most delicious dish in the restaurant.

Lionel waited it.

[Sorry to keep you waiting! Your curry rice and Katsudon. A, I brought your refill of Tonjiru.]

[Oo! I've been waiting! I'll eat it immediately... and one more curry rice please.]

[Praise thee! ...Aa, such a good scent! And tell the owner I want one more Katsudon!]

As soon as it arrived, they asked for reorder and started to eat.

Due to the “appetizer”, their appetite decreased.

The two of them finished eating their food five minutes later.

[...Today is “meat day”? Teriyaki chicken and Sake. Besides that, I’ll have plenty of Tonjiru with no butter.]



“Teriyaki” Tatsugorou, who had some sense of premonition after many years of experience, predicted correctly and quickly gave his order.

He thought that while adding butter was delicious as the soup became richer, when eating with rice it was more delicious not to add any butter.

That was his opinion.

He sipped his bowl of Tonjiru without butter.

[Umu, umu...]

He enjoyed the taste.

He could finally enjoy a meal of rice and sake with Tonjiru after half a year.

The meat and vegetables had absorbed the flavor of miso after simmering for a long time.

[When there’s no butter, it paired well with sake.]

Butter was a good match for this restaurant's Youshoku³, but without the butter the soup matched well with the clear dry liquor that was offered by the restaurant.

Tatsugorou knew it after trying it for many years.

[...Sorry, young lady. A refill for Tonjiru please.]

Then Tatsugorou proceeded to eat Tonjiru and Teriyaki along with alcohol, staying at the restaurant until closing time.

[Oh, another tiring day. Here's today's payment.]

After all the customers went out and they finished cleaning, the owner handed the money and cookies to Aletta.

[Wa! Thank you very much! ...Still, it's such a busy day today.]

[Aa, it's meat day after all.]

The owner nodded to Aletta.

There were more rice orders than usual on meat day.

In spite of the trouble of making Tonjiru, the amount was reduced quickly.

He cooked the soup three times that day.

It was not as much compared to the meat days held on weekdays, but it was still a busy day.

Thanks to that, the evening meals ended at that time.

[Well, it's late, but do you want to eat? I'll cook butter-shoyu Yakionigiri with Tonjiru... that's right. Maybe with dashi-maki too?]



The shopkeeper lifted the contents that had been transferred to the pot he held (the remainder of the beef stew which was the last guest) and said to Aletta.

[Wa! Thank you very much!]

Aletta agreed without hesitation.

[Ou. Wait a moment then. I'll make it now.]

Then, the owner retreated to the kitchen to cook the last meal of the day.

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1. Shichimi – Shichi-mi tōgarashi(七味唐辛子, seven-flavor chili pepper), also known as nana-iro tōgarashi (七色唐辛子, seven-color chili pepper) or simply shichimi, is a common Japanese spice mixture containing seven ingredients.



2. Togaran – chili pepper. In this case it refers to shichimi.
3. Youshoku – Japanese style western food.

CHAPTER 29

PIZZA



Sirius Alphaid.

There was no one in the Kingdom who did not know him, the next head of the Alphaid Company.

A nobleman who inherited his nobility from his mother who was a daughter of an aristocratic family.

When he was born, the Alphaid Company already had a position as a royal merchant.

And then, at discretion of Sirius, he sent his uncles to the Capital city and other cities to create branch offices and further prospered the company.

Half a year ago, his grandfather, the founder of Alphaid Company, entrusted Sirius with his secret.

For the last 20 years... Thomas had been frequenting a restaurant that was the

cornerstone for the company.

He entrusted Sirius the door leading to that place.

At first, it was awesome.

The restaurant's food was very delicious. There were many foods that he, the head of the Alphaid Company that mainly dealt with food, had never eaten.

He stared at the food and enjoyed himself.

And then, he noticed. If he could steal the "taste" of the restaurant's food "further", he could make his company even more prosperous.

But he's not the only one who thought that.

The information gathered by each branch of his company entered his ears and information from the otherworld dining hall was captured by his eyes.

There were many things that could be created if he integrated them.

For example, a young female priestess who was good at baking was recruited from the Nun Monastery where talented female priests gathered by the religion which worshiped the Light God and boasted the highest numbers of believers in the Eastern Continent as an apprentice of the high priest who loved pound cake.

Another example was the noble of Sand Country who loved to drink coffee float resembling the magically chilled coffee that was presented by a messenger from the Sand Country in Western Continent who was visiting the Empire in search of new trade exchanges.

There was also a new alcohol created by the dwarves which was not only strong but also tasted good.

Yes, there were people in his world that had similar thoughts with Thomas.

And Sirius knew better than anyone that such ideas would bear fruit as long as constant effort and time were applied.

...They were not created just by looking at their fingers.

Thus, Sirius started to move.

In the past, it was impossible for Thomas as he feared that the secret would leak before the company became prominent.

It became a big secret that no one else knew. There was one person who “satisfies the conditions” because they were close friends. It was...

[Botchan, please tell me about it soon.]

A young cook called Jonathan who was dedicated to the Alphaid Company asked Sirius.

——— I have an important story. Will you keep it as a secret, Jonathan?

That was why they met up at an old warehouse of the company.

It was quite a respectable place and was rarely used now.

Jonathan did not understand.

[...Yes, is it good now?]

Once Sirius had entered the warehouse and confirmed that no one was watching, they started to talk.

[Today, we’re having a meal together.]

[...Meal? With me?]

Jonathan tilted his head, feeling confused.

Jonathan's father was a cook that was engaged in making new products for the company. As such, he and Sirius were close since their childhood and often played together at the capital before he became Sirius' father's chef.

However, he had never been invited to a meal though they had eaten together while taking a trip.

Not to mention that they were currently inside the old warehouse.

He did not know what kind of "meal" they're going to have.

[Aa, I can't bring anyone else there except for you.]

To the confused Jonathan, Sirius decided to tell him the truth.

It was a secret that only he and his grandfather knew.

[...Over there?]

[Yes, as far as I can tell, the food there was different from this world's. But they're delicious...]

In the back of the old warehouse was a black door with a picture of a cat.

The place where Alphaid Trading Company became the current major company.

[Otherworld dining hall.]

On that day, Jonathan Viennsburg became the third person to know that door.

'Chirinchirin', the doorbell rang when they went through the door.

Jonathan was surprised at first when they came to a bright place from the dark warehouse.

[Botchan, is this really a different world?... Tte, uwa!?!]

While looking around, he saw a lizardman eating a huge heap of egg dish and unexpectedly screamed.

[It's okay. The customers here wouldn't attack anyone even if they're demons.]

While saying so, Sirius went to seat on his usual table.

[Welcome.]

Soon, the owner came with a menu and gently put it down on the table.

Sirius, who recently came often, usually ordered different foods though the Napolitan was his favourite.

Since he knew it, the owner brought the menu along with lemon water and towel.

[Aa, thank you.]

Sirius was familiar with the process and picked up the menu.

He then put it aside gently and said,

[But today I had already decided what to order.]

Then Sirius spoke the order's name.

[I want to order two onion and bacon pizza.]

That day, he ordered something that he wanted Jonathan to eat.

[Okay.]

The owner nodded and immediately retreated to the back.

[...So, what kind of dish is onion and bacon pizza?]

While waiting, Jonathan asked Sirius who was wiping his hands with the towel that the owner brought.

It's an unfamiliar dish. Honestly, he couldn't imagine what kind of dish that is.

[Aa, if it's you, Jonathan, it think you will know after you eat it.]

Sirius answered with a mischievous smile.

(Maa, it's useless to ask about otherworld cuisine.)

Learning from Sirius, Jonathan started to wipe his hands with the towel.

Just like what Sirius-botchan said, this is a different world.

...Perhaps that's the truth.

The furniture of the restaurant was so far from Jonathan's common sense, not to mention some of the customers could not be seen at the Kingdom, let alone at the Capital City.

Indeed, people who were told that this was a different world could be convinced.

(...O, this water, it's infused with lemon.)

Jonathan understood one thing, that the water brought by the owner had a faint refreshing taste.

The owner of this restaurant may be as skilled as the chefs of his world.

(No, Botchan said that the food here is delicious.)

His childhood friend was the heir of a major company dealing with food, he grew up eating the fine cuisine made by the elite chefs of Alphaid Company at the Capital and had a more refined taste palate than even the royalty.

There was no doubt that the owner was a skilled chef.

With that thought, he patiently waited for the onion and bacon pizza with Sirius.

[Sorry to keep you waiting! Here's your onion and bacon pizza!]



After a while, a young demon girl, not the owner, brought their order.

(...This is, baked cheese bread, right?)

Jonathan stared at the freshly baked food.

The food was stretched flat and was cut into 6 pieces, just like bread.

On top of the bread was something red, minced Oranie, cheese, smoked meat and shredded green vegetables.

[Well then, shall we eat? This is particularly delicious while it's still hot.]

That's when Sirius started to eat quickly.

He did not use any knife or fork; he just picked it up with his hand.

Apparently, it was a dish that was eaten just like that.

(What kind of dish this is all along...)

Jonathan was puzzled by the unknown food.

He could tell by eating it. Sirius said so.

Then he would have to eat and see.

Thinking so, Jonathan picked one of the six pieces.

(It's pretty hot...)

Apparently it was baked just like how it looked.

As the melted cheese was stretched out, it was hot enough to burn his hand. He scratched his eyebrow a little.

(Umu. The scent is not bad... un? This is...)

A good scent drifted from the pizza.

The scent of melted cheese and burnt bacon fat mingled together.

Jonathan inwardly tilted his neck as a fragrant scent was also mixed in.

(...Oh well, I will be able to tell once I eat it.)

Though he felt doubt due to the scent, he took a bite of his pizza.

(N!? This is!)

The taste of slightly sour milk of melted cheese and the taste of baked smoked meat with its melted fat.

The bitter taste of Oranie and the green vegetables that were baked while they're raw complimented the dish.

The thin bread used as the base was very soft though its surface was well baked and crunchy; its taste of simple plain bread that was made of good quality wheat with salt and water was suitable for the strong tasting ingredients.

But what made Jonathan most surprised was not those.

[Botchan!? This is... Marmette!?!]

Yes, it was sandwiched between the bread and the ingredients.

Marmette was a sour vegetable that contained an extraordinary umami found by the Alphaid Company. It was cultivated in a remote border of a small country, making it difficult to ship to the Kingdom.

The sauce of the dish was based on Marmette, which was not known by anyone other than the Alphaid Company.

[Aa, it's called tomato at the otherworld. That's right... this is a dish that was made using Marmette as the main ingredient.]

Sirius nodded to Jonathan.

Yes, because Jonathan had a refined palate, he could be hired as the company's chef.

It was the right answer to bring him.

[I'll explain my intentions later... let's continue our meal first.]

Sirius said that to his friend who was eager to resume his "research".

[A, aa... I see.]

Jonathan nodded and immediately stretched his hand towards the rest of the pizza.

(Hot water was added and it was crushed... No, I need a lot of ingenuity.)

Though Jonathan was surprised, he was a chef. He continued to analyze the food while taking a bite.

The basics were similar to the meat sauce that Jonathan helped to develop.

It was a sour sauce that was made by adding hot water and various preparations to the boiled Marmette.

Even Jonathan needed considerable research to be able to recreate the same taste or a taste that was even better than this.

(And this kind of bread was used...)

There was a long time concept of using bread as a plate.

However, there was no concept of putting the ingredients on the bread “before baking” and baking them together in the kiln.

However, he understood the intention. By doing so, the bread and the ingredients became familiar to each other like a couple that had been together for years.

Both the middle part where the bread was thin and its taste mixed with the sauce and ingredients, and the outer edge with strong taste of wheat were delicious.

Bread was no longer just an addition to pizza. It was one of the necessary ingredients.

(If I study it at the company... I see.)

Jonathan noticed Sirius’ intention while eating the pizza.

Sirius’ aim was...

[Botchan. The food is already finished before the research is over... can we order another one?]

[Of course. That’s why I brought you... etto, Aletta-san. Another bacon pizza for him. I want Napolitan.]



He ordered an additional serving to the passing by waitress while smiling at Jonathan who noticed his intentions.

Jonathan was the same as before. For him, his favourite is to exceed the meat sauce that his grandfather loved.

[Yes! Thank you very much!]

The waitress replied lively.

Two meals... no, the research was still on-going.

[But still, that pizza has a very high degree of perfection.]

After coming back to the warehouse, Jonathan relaxed and admired the dish.

After all, Jonathan ate 3 onion bacon pizzas.

The taste was firmly memorized by his tongue. Now he could begin his research.

[Aa, you can change the ingredients as much as you want... at the same time it would be better not to exclude the Marmette.]

Sirius nodded back to Jonathan.

A number of sauces made using Marmette were certainly delicious, but it was not yet

known at the Capital. The only company that could trade it reliably was the Alphaid Company.

...In other words, if the people of the Kingdom learnt of Marmette and loved it as much as themselves and Sirius' grandfather, it would mean further profit for the company.

That is why Sirius chose pizza as a dish for Jonathan to eat first.

The novelty of otherworld manufacturing method and its various applications. Along with pizza's sauce that used Marmette.

Once completed, that dish could replace the Knight's Sauce as the main product of Alphaid Company.

Sirius evaluated pizza so.

[By the way, botchan, that restaurant...]

He looked at Sirius with hopeful eyes.

Jonathan also knew.

To use that door, he needed his friend's permission.

[Aa, I'll take you there again. We can only go there once every 7 days.]

He replied, smiling at his friend.

A young and talented chef, trained by the elite chefs of the company, without any worry of betrayal.

In the company, which was constantly exposed to many enemies due to its rapid growth, it's hard to have trustworthy people.

It was not a mistake that he taught him the secret.

[Thank you very much.]

Jonathan laughed without trying to hide his happiness.

(There's still a lot of delicious food there, I wonder... I'm sorry, but I'm going to steal the technique.)

He recalled the noddle dish with Marmette sauce that his friend ate.

Jonathan secretly resolved to recreate it.

CHAPTER 30

ROAST CHICKEN



On the second floor of a certain cat restaurant was a bar.

The name of the bar was “Leonhart”.

It was a social gathering place for adults; the master started it 20 years ago as an early hope for retirement after travelling around Japan and overseas for business though he was opposed by his family.

It was a small bar with only one small bar counter that the master could manage by himself. As it was remodeled from a large restaurant, the rest of the premises were used to store the bar’s liquor.

The bar had neither young waitresses nor a karaoke, but it was stocked with liquors

that were collected utilizing the master's knowledge from when he was travelling. Not only there were Japanese liquors, there were also foreign ones. The price ranged from cheap to considerable so that people could drink delicious liquor at affordable price.

If the master did not experience bad business and refrained from having a luxurious lifestyle, he could live normally until he dies.

It was such a bar.

Well, this bar was not an ordinary one.

It had a "delivery" system.

Foods could be "delivered" from the restaurant downstairs, which could only be ordered from the bar's opening time of 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

It was more delicious than a normal izakaya's.

The foods that could be ordered had light flavours, but all had "professional taste" made by decent chefs and were compatible with liquor.

A wide variety of alcohol that occupied the majority of the shop premises and delicious food offered by delivery distinguished it from other shops.

As this combination was popular, salarymen from around the neighborhood often visited after work hours to cheerfully drink their favourite liquor along with delicious food.

And the master received a delivery order during Saturday.

'Ding', the food elevator installed at the back of liquor storage stopped at the second floor.

Hearing that sound, he said some words to his customer and headed to the elevator that could not be seen from the customer's vantage point to receive the delivery order.

[Hey, I've been waiting... Oh, it's you today?]

The master greeted the owner who came out of the elevator carrying a tray.

The master knew of the restaurant's secret as the otherworld dining hall since the previous owner who was the previous owner of the building told him about it.

Nearly 20 years ago, after he rented the second floor of the building as he was attracted to the conditions since the delivery service was one of the selling of his bar now, he was quite surprised when he was told of the secret by the previous owner.

However, the events on the basement floor where the restaurant was located were different originally.

Sometimes when it wouldn't affect Leonhart, he was asked to sell liquor to the "customers from other world".

[I thought the usual waitress is the one bringing it... do you want to consult about liquor?]

For the past few months, the task of "delivery" during Saturdays was handed to the newly hired blond waitress with weird hair ornaments.

That's why when the owner handled it, it meant that there was something he wanted to consult about.

The master who had known the owner since he was underage sensed exactly what he wanted.

[Ee. There's something I want to consult about for a moment.]

While he lightly replied to the question, the owner handed the tray he was carrying to the master.

Brilliant green, still warm, freshly boiled edamame.



Fried potato chips seasoned with green laver and salt.



Sweet homemade rum raisin sandwiched between salty biscuits.



The classic mix of egg and tuna sandwich with ham and cheese sandwich.





Three kinds of grilled rice balls of butter miso, negi miso and salted kelp that were recently added to the restaurant's menu.



All of those dishes were orders of his regulars who immediately came when the bar opened after finishing their weekend work and were particularly popular food items among his customers.

[Yaa, thanks. Let's start after we serve this.]

While saying that, the master put down the side dishes one after another in front of the respective customers.

[Sorry to keep you waiting. Delivery has arrived... would you like to order anything else?]

While putting down the side dishes, he received an order of sake.

He then processed the additional order calmly.

It was quite inside the bar. Most customers who came to Leonhart wanted to drink quietly, as such it was rare for the bar to have noisy customers.

[Take your time. I'll be at the back for a while.]

After saying that to his customers, he retreated to the storage.

[So, what kind of alcohol do you want?]

He asked the owner that was waiting in front of the elevator.

[Let's see... can you give me two bottles of sweet shochu¹? It seems shochu is really popular today.]

The owner was familiar with this situation and said his "order" without pause.

[Shochu, huh. Oh right... are you okay with authentic shochu of sweet potato and barley that I ordered from Kyushu? Their alcohol content is a bit high.]

After pondering on the owner's orders, he immediately listed the alcohols that matched the condition.

[Thank you very much. I'm saved.]

The owner nodded.

The owner was not very familiar with liquor so he depended on the master who was an alcohol connoisseur.

When it came to alcohol, he trusted the master's choices.

[Well... this is it.]

The master quickly found the alcohol and handed them to the owner.

[Payment will be as usual. Deduct the amount from the rent at the end of the month.]

[Yes. Thank you very much.]

The owner bowed slightly while holding the bottles.

[By the way, what kind of customers ordered it?]

The master asked the owner who was about to return to the restaurant.

Previously when he asked who ordered the large bottle of whiskey, the owner answered that it was two male dwarves who carried an axe each on their back.

Who ordered alcohol today?

It was a form of his curiosity.

[Aa, the customer who ordered this is... an ogre.]

He described a little bit. It suited the new customer when he thought about it.

[O, ogre?]

[Ee. He's big and has horns.]

While smiling at the bewildered master, the owner further elaborated.

A shabby mountain hut prepared for travelers built near a mountain path at the Western Continent.

[I should grill it.] [Well, I should boil it.]

Inside, while discussing on how to cook the "ingredient" that was acquired, was an ogre named Tatsuji who resided there.

[I like this kind of food, it's delicious so I want to eat it as much as I can. I still feel like a kid. I want to prepare this and roast it with salt. Isn't it fine?]

Nearly twice the size of an average human was an ogre with red skin, black hair and two yellow horns.

Tatsuji who wore clothes made from tiger fur, wanted to eat quickly.

[No no, look carefully. The his legs were hairy, right? Surely it has a strong taste. It will not taste good if it's not cooked well.]

The one who said that was a female ogre named Otoro who was three heads taller than average woman with white skin, black hair and two horns.

They would not yield to each other. Both of their opinions clashed because they thought each of their cooking methods would make the food delicious.

And that was why they continued to argue.

[The ogre wife. Why don't you just listen to me for a while?]

The two of them still discussed about the "ingredient".

[What?]

[For your information, you shouldn't be picky of your food just because it's not delicious. You can't cook properly even if you have proper ingredients.²]

[Yeah, yeah. Even I know that...]

Food that they created unfortunately was said to be... awful by a rat-like travelling "self-proclaimed" (awful) minstrel Halfling who spat the food out after eating it.

They glanced sideways at the mountain of bones that were tied with a rough rope made of mountain vines stacked at the corner of the room.

[Although you heard it from an uninvolved person, it seems that you don't have discerning tongues. That's why I thought... do you know about the food from another world?]

They could go there if they wanted to taste it.

To prevent the other parties from realizing it, he internally smiled.

[Otherworld?] [Cuisine?]

On the other hand, the two of them seemed confused.

[Exactly. It's a different world food. Actually, once in 7 days... just today, a door to the restaurant that served otherworld food will appear around here. The food there has a

reputation of being very delicious in this world.]

He got them.

With that in his mind, the rat³ kept on speaking.

[Liar.] [I have never heard of it.]

[No problem. That's the truth. I saw it when I climbed the mountain. As I said, it appears once every 7 days.

...And the alcohol there is very delicious. Gee, it's a shame.

If you want, I can give you guidance. What do you think...]

He sighed seeing the suspicion on the two's faces.

Because he didn't want to seem to be acting, he recalled the food from that restaurant and actually expressed his feelings of sympathy from his heart.

[...If he says so, why don't we keep him alive until he guides us to this restaurant?]

[...All right? If you lie, I would eat your feet while you're still alive though.]

He guessed they sniffed the truth from the rat's words.

The ogre couple said such a thing.

[Oo! That's good! Well then, I'll show you the way...]

Without being freed from the ropes that he was tied with, he was lifted and placed on a shoulder.

[Oh, let me know which way to go. I'll lift you there.]

[It would all be naught if you escape. If you don't want to be eaten alive, you realize you have to guide us properly?]

[...Okay.]

The world was not so sweet.

The rat admitted with a sigh of relief that was half regretful.

Then after they ran for roughly an hour, they arrived.

[...This is it.] [No way it's true.]

While thinking that there was something strange, the two ogres murmured while putting down the Halfling.

At their destination was a black door with a picture of a cat.

The door to the otherworld dining hall.

[Come here... the husband, I'm sorry to tell you, but could you release me from the ropes?]

If you think normally, such a door would be out of place there.

In other words, he said the truth.

Judging that, he nodded to the rat's words and tore the rope.

It was sunny and the rat was freed.

[You're welcome...]

While rubbing at his rope burns, he said that to the couple.

[Well then, open the door immediately.]

[Why? Can't you do it yourself?]

To the rat's words, Tatsuji was suspicious.

In response to those words, the rat said sadly.

[No, but I'm hated by this door... Let me show you.]

Rat proceeded to touch the handle of the door... and showed that his hand slipped without even touching it.

[Although it's an embarrassing story, I was "denied to enter" the other world. As such, I can't open the door.]

As he said that, his words were tinged with heartfelt regret.

Once, he felt ravenous and ordered a lot of food even though he didn't have any money. The price to pay was a lot.

After that, he apologized to the owner and he was forgiven, but the door did not forgive him. Even now, he couldn't open the door.

That's why the rat tried to enter the restaurant with the samurai of the Mountain Country, the onmyouji of Sea Country and the naïve princess...

And that was why it was necessary to prepare "guests who could enter" like the horrible ogre couple.

[So, husband, please open it.]

[There's no helping it.]

Prompted by the rat, Tatsuji grasped the handle.

Unlike the rat, Tatsuji's hand could grasp the handle and he opened the door.

'Chirinchirin', the door opened.

[...Well then, let's go. Follow me.]

[Yes.] [Okay.]

As he said that to Otoro and the rat, Tatsuji bended down and entered the door.

That was the moment they became customers of otherworld dining hall.

It was evening at that time, but the inside of the restaurant was bright.

Tatsuji and Otoro glanced around... and noticed it.

[You...] [You...]

[No, no. It's not on purpose.]

They understood the situation and looked at the rat behind them who had a deceptive face.

Inside the store, the regulars were eating and drinking as usual.

A large samurai that seemed stronger than any warrior they had seen before.

A male elf that lowered his thin sword after sensing Tatsuji's sharp thirst of blood.

A lion headed man with scars all over his body.

A high-ranking samurai from Mountain Country and an onmyouji from Sea Country with powerful magical presence.

A young woman bearing a gold holy symbol that showed that she was a high priestess of Light God with a younger priestess.

A vampire couple who drank red wine and a lamia with the lower body of a red snake eating egg wrapped in meat.

And an old magician whose power was greater than Tatsuji could ever imagine.

...Tatsuji could barely compete with even one of them. The warriors, magicians and demons were watching them while eating their meal.

They were veterans who could beat the ogre couple and Tatsuji felt afraid to be in the vicinity.

That's what he understood.

The strength of the opponents... now, if they turned the people inside the restaurant into enemies, they would be desperate to survive, let alone win against them.

It showed that it was necessary to be quiet in that restaurant.

To rampage was absurd.

[I don't think any of the dishes were this world's food and alcohol. The people who want to eat here are of mixed races.]

For now, the crisis of life had escaped.

While thinking that, the rat called the demon waitress to say his order.

[Well then, although the order is presumptuous... young lady, I want to order alcohol. Your biggest bottle of "shochu", with three cups on the rocks.

Also, for food... six roast chickens please. Make sure the shochu comes out first.

Also, just the thigh meat for roast chicken.]

[Ye, yes!]

Looking at the ogre couple, the waitress nodded to the order that was told in rapid succession in the familiar way of a regular. She then retreated to the kitchen.

[Well...both of you, please go to appropriate seats.]

The rat laughed at them as they watched.

It was the thickness of the liver peculiar to the dwarves, and it was the wind blowing wherever it gets stired. {TN: Again, I don't understand what the author means here.}

[...The same. Remember that for later. Otoru, let's go.] [Aiyo.]

Tatsuji sighed while staring at the Halfling that only reached to his knee and sat down on the well-polished floor.

And while placing his elbow to the table to a good position, he asked the rat sitting on a chair to readjust the position of his legs that could not reach the floor.

[Then, what you were asking earlier was the difference between the alcohol that we know and the other world's alcohol.]

[Oh, that's right.]

After the nodding confirmation from Otoru, he proceeded to describe the perfect dish

for the two of them from his own experience.

[First of all, “shochu” is an alcohol of a different world, and it has a strong taste like the alcohol that the Dwarves make. Pour it into a glass with ice... it taste supreme.]

[Ano... I brought your shochu.]

The rat’s face bloomed seeing the transparent bottle of shochu that was brought.

[Thank you so much... husband, wife, your first cup.]

He hurriedly received the liquor and the glass cups from the waitress.

He then poured the shochu into the glass that contained the large, clear ice.

[It’s quite a strong liquor, so please be careful.]

He poured the shochu into his own cup while advising the couple

[E. This degree of liquor... Uo!?!]

After sipping his liquor, he exclaimed in surprise.

The reason was because the strong liquor was so different than the muddy wine that Tatsuji usually drank.

Though it was strong liquor, it had a soft taste to the tongue and made his throat and belly warm.

[...I’m surprised. It has a strong flavor and a nice smell.]

Otora who rolled the alcohol in her mouth was surprised at the taste. It was delicious.

The peculiar flavor of the alcohol was not as strong as the Dwarves’ liquor.

On the contrary, it had a slightly sweet smell and scent, spreading gently inside their mouth.

[I see. The alcohol of otherworld is really delicious.]

Tatsuji emptied his cup and refilled his and Otora’s cups.

Otora was good at cooking and drinking alcohol, but this was strong and delicious.

...It was such a satisfying taste that there were Dwarven guests drinking it.

[Hee. Every dish here is delicious, but the alcohol is also exceptional.]

The rat said to Tatsuji somewhat proudly.

As a child born from a travelling Halfling, he had known of this place since a long time ago.

...His eyes observed, and all of the “guests” that he guided here were all satisfied by his dish suggestions.

[Then, what kind of food did you order? I heard you saying “Roast Chicken”.]

After the first shochu was emptied, Otoru asked the rat.

Honestly, this alcohol was really delicious, so if the accompanying dish was off, it would be really disappointing.

It was such a feeling.

[Hee. It’s like baking the leg of a fat bird... Oops, here it comes.]

[Sorry to keep you waiting. I brought your Roast Chicken.]

When he tried to explain the dish, the owner came bringing a big plate with a new bottle of shochu.

On the plate was 6 pieces of large roasted bird thigh meat.

Poured on top of the chicken meat was plenty of gravy made of seasoned meat juice and black pepper.



[Enjoy your meal.]

After placing their order on the middle of the table, he retreated back to the kitchen.

[This is roast chicken...]

[I guess its roasted bird meat... It looks delicious.]

Smelling the fragrant scent, the couple swallowed their saliva.

[Now, let's eat it while it's still hot. It tastes best when it's piping hot.]

The rat advised the couple while taking a piece for himself.

The couple followed the advice, picked up a piece each and took a bite at the same time.

[[Delicious!?!]]

At that moment, they exclaimed in surprise when the taste struck their tongue.

It was such a wonderful taste that they could not believe that it was simply roasted.

The easily peeled skin had such a fragrant scent.

The plump and soft meat with overflowing amount of meat juice.

And the harsh pepper used in the gravy which tightened the overall taste of the meat.

The combination of those three was really mouth-watering.

[How is it? Isn't it delicious?]

To the rat's question, Tatsuji and Otoru nodded their heads.

It was their first time eating such a delicious roasted meat.

[And here's the next one!]

After saying so, the rat took another bite of his meat, swallowed it and then drank his

newly poured shochu.

[A~! Delicious!]

He wiped his mouth and smiled satisfactorily.

The strong liquor spread in his mouth and washed away the meat's taste.

This combination was a particularly delicious way of eating the otherworld's cuisine.

[Kkaa~! What is this!?!]

[I can't wait anymore! It's too little! There's not enough meat and alcohol! Give me more!]

The couple learned from the rat and tried eating the same way.

Even though it's just meat and liquor, it's his favourite.

If it's this delicious, it's inevitable to think that's this food was not of their world.

[Come on, let's eat more. Today, I'll pay the bill.

...Aa, with Roast Chicken you can have Teriyaki or Curry flavor. That's sweet or spicy.

First of all, I want squid to match this alcohol's strong flavour. And the side dish...]

Glancing at the couple engrossed on the food and alcohol, he quickly said his reorders.

And the two of them steadily ate the food and the alcohol that came one after another...

When he noticed it, it was daytime already.

[Uu...]

At the summit of the mountain where there was a door the day before, Tatsuji heavily sat up.

[Oh, my head...]

Due to drinking too yesterday, his head was throbbing painfully.

The alcohol named "shochu" was strong. It was too strong.

For Alcohol, Tatsuji and Otoru had only known the muddy wine that they usually drank. As a result of drinking too much alcohol, the both of them became drunk.

[Oi... get up...]

Shaking his head, he told the sleeping Otoru to wake up.

[Uu... I don't feel good...]

Otoru seemed to suffer from a hangover too and her movements were sluggish.

[...Apparently, it seems that he has escaped...]

Unnoticed, the Halfling was not there anymore.

Even if they pursued him, they couldn't catch up to him anymore. They didn't know where to head to anyway.

[Whatever...]

He murmured absently.

Yesterday's memories were blurry, but he remembered it.

The door would appear once every 7 days.

It was strictly prohibited to go out of control there as it was impossible for ridiculous customers to ever return to the restaurant.

As long as the owner was paid by the money that the humans used, he would serve food and alcohol even to demons.

...And the food and alcohol there was very good.

[6 days later...]

[That's true...]

He murmured vaguely.

Let's go again next time. They'll use the money they stored that they had no use before.

While holding their throbbing head, they returned home while feeling determined.

1. Shochu – **Shōchū**(焼酎) is a Japanese distilled beverage less than 45% alcohol by volume. It is typically distilled from rice (*kome*), barley (*mugi*), sweet potatoes (*satsuma-imo*), buckwheat (*soba*), or brown sugar (*kokutō*), though it is sometimes produced from other ingredients such as chestnut, sesame seeds, potatoes or even carrots.



2. アタイならちゃんと美味しく料理できんだからね – I don't understand what this means.
3. The rat refers to the Halfling. Maybe he has rat-like face.

CHAPTER 31

CREPES



In the unexplored wilderness of Eastern Continent, there was a small country that was called the Flower Country.

The Eastern Continent had long winters and short summers but unlike the rest of the region, this country's territory was a flower garden with the warmth of spring that continued all year long.

It was such a place.

Because it was such a place, 100 years ago during the "War with Evil God", the Allied Human Knights and Demon Generals invaded this country in order to make it a front base in their effort of attacking each other.

Assuming that they would have a decisive battle with each other, they rallied their forces and intruded into the flower garden... however, both of the opposing forces

were attacked by the “citizens” of that country and were forced to retreat.

Yes, the country where colourful spring flowers bloomed all year round had been the country of “Faeries” for more than 1,000 years.

Fairy. Each of them has a small body that could ride on a palm with butterfly wings enabling them to fly freely in the air, and a race with magical power comparable to the elves which compensates for their size.

Though they were not weak, they were temperate enough not to attack elsewhere. However, they were brave enough not to permit anyone to trample their territory.

True enough, the ruler of that time, Queen Silvia Silverio XII, was furious enough by the selfish invasions of the humans and demons to tackle their elite forces by herself, fighting bravely by fully utilizing her magical powers and borrowing the earth’s, and successfully drove them away.

Since then, the Flower Country was feared by the human kin and demon tribe, and they enjoyed their long peace without even exerting their powers.

About half a year ago, movement started to appear during their peaceful stagnation.

[Your Majesty! It’s urgent!]

At noon, that voice reverberated inside the green castle braided with beautiful flowers.

[Well, that’s usually the case.]

Seeing the elderly sorcerer who came rushing, Tiana Silverio XVI, the queen of the flower country who just ascended the throne two years ago with beautiful green hair and eyes and lustrous rainbow wings with black bordering, felt disgusted.

[...Her Majesty has also noticed?]

To her words, the sorcerer rebuffed without thinking.

Tiana quietly nodded to his question.

[Of course. This garden is Ours. If there is an abnormality, We will notice immediately. Especially, if it's right in front of Our caste.]

On that day, without taking more than a single step out of the throne room, Tiana who was the best sorcerer in the country saw what had occurred.

The fairy tribe specializes in magic due to their magical power and their small, helpless bodies.

They have no use of swords and bows in battle like human kin, they exclusively use their magic or golems created by magic.

For that reason, magical power is really important for the king of their country. Those that are best at magical power were selected to the throne regardless of their gender.

It was inevitable that the queen of fairies was an excellent sorcerer.

[Let's face it...]

Then Tiana stood up as if waiting for this report.

[Whatever it is, it is not permissible for them to trample in Our territory. Everyone, leave Us.]

Her voice became louder and was heard by the guardsmen in the vicinity.

Yes, this is the Flower Country.

Those who dared to invade the country of fairies would not be forgiven.

In the Flower Country, right in front of a castle that was regarded as small from a human point of view.

[...This is... a door, right?]

Tiana who glanced around to the people who were gathering there murmured unintentionally.

It was a big door that was usually used by humans... there was no such door in the Flower Country.

A black door with golden handle and a picture of a beast drawn on it.

Of course, it did not exist until last night.

[...It seems to be a kind of summoning magic...]

Tiana was determined because its identity was unknown to anyone.

[We shall invade this door. The sorcerers will protect the country. Leave this to Us.]

If the true identity of this door was confirmed, the people's uneasiness would come to rest.

Tiana's came to a quick decision.

[What!? Your Majesty! That is dangerous!?!]

[Do not disobey me. We are the queen of this country. We have an obligation to protect it.

...We'll go after preparation is finished.]

To the sorcerers who shouted in surprise, Tiana would use the secret weapon of the Flower Country.

[Respond to my call, come before me, Guardian!]

She took a grain from a bag that she pocketed and dropped it while activating the magic.

In this Flower Country, only one grain could be harvested once a year from a flower which was planted during the "Old Dragon Era" in the flower bed inside the castle that was protected by magic.

And by applying secret magic passed on the successive queens, the strongest guardian of the Flower Country was born.

Oooooo...

With the seed resonating from the surface of the earth, it incorporated the magic of

the surrounding earth and dense green vines started to grow from the seed.

After they elongated, they tangled together and started to form a shape.

Its appearance was a green giant. The vines gathered to shape like a muscle and pink flowers were blooming in places where its eyes should be.

Its height was similar to a giant... about three times larger than a normal human.

[Okay, guardian. Follow Us.]

Oooooo...

In response to the queen's order, the giant responded with a roaring sound from the bottom of the earth, recognizing its master.

[Alright... everyone, leave this door first.]

Leaving the giant, Tiana retreated from the door.

She did not know what kind of danger lurked beyond it because she did not anything about it except that it's created by magic.

Therefore she would reserve her judgement.

[Alright... Guardian! Open that door!]

Oooooo...

In response to the queen's order, the giant bended down.

Grasping the handle of the door with two of its fingers that's similar to thick branches, it gently opened the door.

Chirinchirin...

The door opened with a sound of a bell, which was a signal to activate its magic.

[...Well, this is a transfer device.]

On the other side of the door, it was slightly hazy and the details could not be seen, but seeing a bright room with human-like shapes inside, Tiana knew that it's a kind of a magic device that used the magic of transference.

[What will you do, Your Majesty?]

[...That's right. First of all...]

Overlooking the confirmation of the head sorcerer, she kept an eye on the elite sorcerers of the Flower Country.

[Let's find out the other side's intention. We shall lead the unit. Any objections?]

It's a quick decision.

With lightning speed decision, Tiana gave her orders in rapid succession.

[Something like that... it's dangerous! We do not know what's on the other side! And with this door, the guardian could not pass!?!]

[What are you waiting for? Leave the head sorcerer here, prepare a magic square for withdrawal. It will be useful for emergency.]

Tiana did not heed the head sorcerer's warnings.

The queens of the Flower Country for successive years had kept the country's independence and maintained the territory for a long time. They were the ones to respect the bravery to stand in the vanguard voluntarily over being in a safe place as they were strongest sorcerers in the fairy country as well as its king.

And Tiana also imposed on herself not to be ashamed of that tradition.

[This is an invitation to Us. Let us go inside.]

This was the first unusual situation to the Flower Country in 100 years.

The fact bounced without knowing the young queen's heart.

Well, now was the time to show the power and knowledge worthwhile of a queen that could not be used during peaceful time.

[We will lead the people of this country. Then We shall talk to the people over there.]

Even if it's dangerous in some cases.

Inside the restaurant, it was a kind of a strange case.

[Wha, what is this!?!]

One of the sorcerers in the troop raised a surprised voice.

It was such a strange sight.

As soon as they passed the door, the sight which was blurred became clear.

[...Calm down.]

A scene that was before their eyes...

Tiana gave instructions to her troop, even though they were surprised by the sight of humans, demons and other tribes eating as much as they like rather than fighting with each other.

(What kind of place is this...)

Of course, Tiana herself did not know.

Information was insufficient. They had to gather more at least.

Tiana concentrated and observed the magical power.

[...Is that a half-elf magician?]

And, that one was singled out.

A half-elf with silver hair with blue well-tailored clothes was wearing a cloak of magic.

As a mithril cane was placed beside her, there was no doubt that she was a magician.

And from the strength of her magical power and her perfect control of it, she was born with high magical power comparable to Tiana and refined it under a good teacher.

(Let's find out what kind of place this is.)

She judged so and approached the magician after winking to her subordinates.

[...Excuse me. You seem to be a magician. We are Queen Tiana Silverio XVI of Flower Country. If you do not mind, can you tell Us where this place is?]

To the queen's words, the half-elf magician stopped eating what seemed to be a yellow slime and said,

[I am the princess of the Principality, Victoria Samanak. I am honored to meet the queen of the Flower Country.

...And here is the otherworld dining hall "Nekoya" that was connected to our world through that door.]

It seemed that this was a different world restaurant.

After listening to the rough explanation from Victoria, Tiana pondered.

[A shop offering cooked food... We have heard that the humans and the elves prefer it.]

Tiana remembered what she was taught from her teacher who had travelled the human world back when she was a child.

Unlike fairies who ate raw fruits and flower nectars in the flower fields, humans eat food by burning them in fire or hot water.

And the otherworld dining hall offers food that had been subjected to various treatments.

[But... is it really delicious by doing so? From what We have heard, it is not as good as the honey of the Flower Country.]

[It's delicious.]

To Tiana's question, Victoria nodded with conviction.

Victoria had been visiting the restaurant for 8 years. The more you don't get tired of the food, the better the taste of the restaurant's food.

[I see... well, anything is experience. Magician, could you recommend something that could fit with Our tastes?]

Tiana was interested after seeing Victoria's powerful affirmation.

If she could say so with so much conviction, she could probably eat it.

[I understand. The perfect cuisine for you is...]

Victoria pondered after Tiana's question.

(First of all, I should recommend a dessert.)

The fairies' staple food is fruit and honey from the flower fields.

Both are sweet.

(...Parfait has problems with its vessels.)



A glimpse to the princess eating a glass of parfait with a big smile... an exception.

The vessel in which parfait was served had a deep bottom.

It would be a pain to eat if it was taller than the queen's height.

(Pudding a la mode... but the fairies hate bitter things...)



Next, she glanced at what she was eating, but it would not be a good match.

Victoria belonged to a faction that did not admit that pudding was better without caramel.

(Probably dessert with many fruits will do. Not raw ones but processed. All that's left is...)

And Victoria got the answer.

[...Crepe with mixed fruits. I recommend it to you.]

[Very well. We'll order it.]

Tiana nodded to Victoria's answer and made an affirmation.

[I see... Owner. One mixed fruit crepe. It's best if you cut it to smaller pieces like hotcakes.]

[Okay.]

The owner who was surprised seeing a fairy like those in fairy tales retreated to the kitchen after receiving Victoria's order.

After a while, the owner came back with a plate.

[Sorry I made you wait. Here's your mixed fruit crepe.]



On the plate was something like a dull yellow and brown mottled cloth.

Wrapped inside it was something soft and white with colorful fruits gathered to a bouquet shape.

(Hoh, so this is a crepe. Human beings sure think a lot.)

Red, orange, green... pure white and the beautiful cloth that wrapped the fruits.

Crepe was a food that looked good.

[Well then, I'll cut it now.]

Then the owner cut the crepe into bite sized pieces so that the faeries in front of him could easily eat it.

With a well-polished silver knife, the crepe was finely cut.

The owner cut the crepe as evenly as possible... with care to avoid making "failures" without fruit.

[Well then, enjoy.]

After finishing the work, the owner retreated to the kitchen to cook for another customer as usual.

[...Well, We suppose We should eat first.]

Among the group, Tiana said that.

[Something like that!? It may be poisonous! It's dangerous!?!]

[That is why.]

She calmly replied to one of the surprised sorcerers.

[No poison will be effective against the protection of Our magic. That is why We shall eat first.]

That was what she said.

On the other hand... she was curious about the taste of the food in front of her.

(First of... I'll have a little taste.)

With her hands, she picked the piece with orange fruit and bit the edge of the cloth-like food.

That part did not taste very much. For a fairy like Tiana who liked sweet foods, she felt disappointed.

(Hmm... this white thing next... Muu!?)

With her expectation lowered, she licked the white part and her eyes widened in surprise.

It was sweet and soft and melted in her mouth.

Sweet, but not just sweet, it tasted like fresh milk.

(Delicious! This sweetness... Mumuu!?)

Tiana who ate it saw black and white.

It was an orange fruit.

It was sweet and contained plenty of water; it was delicious when eaten raw.

(What... the already sweet fruit was soaked in sweet water!?)

It was sweeter than any fruit that Tiana had eaten.

As a result, the fruit in this crepe was so sweet like it was melting, making Tiana felt

that it was a dream.

(This deliciousness... it's possible?)

After enjoying the taste, she noticed the fact and saw the crepe.

...Sandwiched between the crepes were various fruits, different from the orange ones.

(As I thought!)

And Tiana knew that all of them were different kinds of fruit.

Red berries were boiled in large amount of sugar water, they had sweet and mellow flavor.

Translucent green berries that seemed to be frozen once with magic or something, it was cold with sharp flavor.

And the yellow fruit that was a cut out of a ring that Tiana did not know of, it had a degree of acidity though it was as sweet as the orange fruit.

(I see, the cloth wrapping has a meaning...)

And as she ate them, she noticed it.

It was the cloth that did not have much taste before.

It was also based on calculations.

The sweet white thing and the various fruits.

A foundation that supported those intense sweetness.

That was the fabric.

If the cloth had more taste, the taste of the dish would be too sweet.

Yes, this was the first time the crepe had enough taste.

———Aa, as I thought this crepe was indeed poisonous...

Tiana learned it while analyzing the taste of the crepe.

Although her stomach was full, she could not stop her hands from carrying more food to her mouth.

———She was sure that this was a terrible poison to rupture her belly.

Such an idea crossed her head.

The temptation of sweet and sour fruit and the white thing that was sweeter than anything.

No matter how powerful her magic was, there was no resistance to “eating too much”.

Tiana was unable to stop until her belly had her fill.

Tiana continued to eat the crepe to her limit and finally stopped by raising a lovely voice.

Then she sighed sweetly and her subordinates asked her after waiting a while.

[...So, how was it, Your Majesty?...]

One of the sorcerer’s aides swallowed their saliva and asked Tiana.

On the contrary, Tiana only said one word while wiping the cream from her mouth.

[Umu. No problem... please eat.]

The moment Tiana said those words.

The fairies cluttered the crepes.

Everyone could not wait any longer after watching the queen ate so deliciously in front of them and cheered at the melting sweetness.

[...Victoria, thank you. This is a reward, so please keep it.]

While watching her men, Tiana passed Victoria a gift befitting the royalty... the treasure of the Flower Country.

[This is a kind of flower that could only be grown in Flower Country... do you understand what this means?]

Victoria's eyes widened in surprise.

[...This is?]

At first glance it was a brown seed that could be found anywhere.

However, Victoria recognized it due to the extraordinary magical power contained in it.

A seed of a phantom flower that was almost extinct since ancient times except in the Flower Country.

Just by drinking a decoction made from it could rejuvenate someone for 1 year.

It could also be used as a powerful catalyst for magic.

Although in the royal treasury of the Principality there was a seed that was strictly protected by magic, it could be traded for tremendous price in the market.

[No problem. We heard that it was an extremely valuable article for man, but if We want, We can get it.]

To Victoria's glossy smile, Tiana said that.

[...I understand. From now on, I will pay for all the food you order in this restaurant.]

In response to what she got as a reward, Victoria further pledged.

Even if she paid until her life expectancy ran out, it was cheaper as a price for her reward, but this was the only thing she could give back to the queen.

[Really, sorry for your trouble.]

Tiana thoroughly appreciated that indeed.

As the Flower Country was isolated from the humans, it was not easy to get hold of human currency.

As a matter of concern, she was pleased that the method of payment was taken care of from now on.

...From now on, she already decided to visit the restaurant once every 7 days.

(What, other people will not be against it.)

Her 100 subordinates had already eaten that big crepe.

And she wanted to try the next “helping¹” again.

Tiana did not think that people would oppose coming to the restaurant again.

Then, six months later.

Today as well, the “door countermeasure meeting” was confusing.

[Today’s order should be chocolate banana! I want to know the goodness of that bitter taste!]



[What did you say! The sweetness of strawberry jam and sweet and sour taste of cream cheese may be better!?!]



[For sweetness, custard is better! We should have custard as the ingredient!]

[That's not right! The fluffy texture of cream and custard is different!

It's the world's principle that cream is better than custard!]

[Ano~, I heard that there are crepes that are not sweet though.]

[[[[Dismissed! Crepes that are not sweet are not crepes!]]]]]

The agenda was only “which crepe would you like to order except for mixed fruit”, but it was not going well.

[Your Majesty! The citizens selected for this excursion have already gathered at the cathedral door square! If you do not leave urgently, there would be a riot!]

In the midst of such conference, the head sorcerer came in and gave his report to Tiana.

[We understand. Let's head off soon.]

Tiana gradually nodded to his words and stood up in a hurry.

[Let's go. We are sorry to hear the results, but think of the rest that are waiting.]

Only then, Tiana headed to the square where people were waiting for the great queen to appear.

From that, Tiana who brought back information repeatedly held discussion and came to an agreement for Nekoya.

Even though it's a huge restaurant for humans, it was indeed a nuisance to push across thousands of citizens in the country.

Therefore, before going through the door that appears only once in 7 days, only 200 people and Tiana would be selected through a strict drawing regardless of position, age or power.

It was such an arrangement.

[We kept you waiting, Our citizens! Now, let's depart! To otherworld dining hall!]

Tiana gave a speech to the citizens who brought basket knitted from grass vines to store otherworld confectionaries in their hands and danced in a state where they could not hide their expectations in front of the door.

They cheered and gathered nearer the door.

[All right! Golem! Open the door! Open the way to another world!]

The giant who became the doorman obediently turned the doorknob and opened the door.

'Chirinchirin', numerous fairies passed through the door while listening to the bell.

[Ah! Welcome!]

In a state like this, the recently hired demon waitress got used to this situation.

[Umu. We'll go to a table first. Then, the menu.]

One nod to the waitress, Tiana ordered her.

And on that day also, a sweet feast began.

1. Helping here means second helping or another plate.

CHAPTER 32

TANMEN NOODLE



9 p.m. last night.

[Let's see... I wonder...]

While leaving the dining room cleaning to Aletta, the owner was thinking what he should cook in front of the stove.

The business of otherworld dining hall ended successfully and he finished cleaning up the restaurant easily, but there was one important problem.

As they had not eaten yet, it's a matter of their late dinner.

That day was a thriving day... it was too prosperous.

Barefoot dwarves who ate so much that you wondered how they could pack the food

inside their bodies came in two digits, including families.

Aletta who was a genuine person of the otherworld said that they were member of a different race called “Halflings”, but the owner could not differentiate them from human children at first.

Only 10 people, but there were 10 people.

When 1 person came in a group with their family members, the restaurant became very busy every time.

Anyway, the opponents were Halflings who were hardcore gluttons.

In addition, when it comes to the otherworld dining hall where they could visit only once in few months, they did not have the words “planning” or “saving” in their minds, they used all of their money they had in their hands to order food.

Oh yes, they ate one dish after another.

Moreover, other ordinary customers’ appetites were stimulated seeing them eat and ordered more food than usual.

Thus the otherworld dining hall at that day became a battle field and the dinner time for the owner and Aletta shifted to that time, which could be regarded as a late night meal.

Well, that alone was still good. The problem was...

[I don’t even have any pasta left...]

Yes, it’s the lack of staple ingredients. This was also the works of those Halflings.

Halflings had no idea of savings.

For that reason, they used all of their money.

In the past, there was a Halfling with a face similar to a mouse who could not pay for his food once, but unexpectedly he travelled around the continent spreading the fact

of otherworld dining hall to other Halflings and had never come alone ever since then.

Thus, there were unexpectedly a lot of Halflings whose pockets hit the limit before they could fully fill their stomach and gave up ordering more while crying.

So, what the Halflings did after their final orders were to eat bread, rice and soup as much as possible.

In Nekoya, bread, rice and soup were complimentary. No matter how much they ate, the price wouldn't change.

In order to satisfy their appetites, they ate those instead.

It was commonplace to eat rice with soup and bread without soup.

They'll do everything they could to cover the whole pattern.

In addition, they used the seasonings on the tables properly; they applied those in various ways.

How they got the hint that butter was used for Tonjiru during meat day, they did not use any butter with bread, they ate the soup with the complimentary hot rice, and used the shoyu without anyone teaching them.

So, the rice, bread and soup were completely consumed.

The pasta and flour which were originally stockpiled were no longer enough even for 1 person.

Fortunately, there were meat and vegetables left, but as a Japanese, it was tough to eat a meal without staple food.

That was the situation.

[It will be too late if I cook the rice now... but I can't not to eat anything...]

If it's just him alone, he would just sleep with an empty stomach, but during Saturdays there were another employee except for himself.

If he thought about it, he was very busy that day and had done quite well during the day.

And that's why not having any dinner... it was too painful.

[Something like that happened... oh, that's right.]

After a while, the owner remembered that existence.

[If I'm not wrong, I kept a bag of instant noodles on the third floor...]

Instant salt ramen that could be bought, sometimes you just wanted to eat it.

There were five packs and only one pack had been used two weeks ago.

[And when it comes to it... Tanmen noodles.]

The owner quickly took more vegetables after deciding the menu while rubbing his protruding belly.

Tanmen noodles with fresh meat and vegetables stir-fry.

Recently, when he wanted to instant noodles, that's what he wanted.

[Saa. That'll work...]

It was ten minutes until Aletta finished cleaning the dining room.

That would be enough until it's finished.

And after 10 minutes.

[All right. I finished cleaning!]

Aletta carefully checked the dining room satisfactorily with a mop in her right hand and a table cloth in her left hand.

The black wooden tables were polished and there was no more trash on the floor.

[Well then, I'll wash my hands first before reporting to the owner.]

As she muttered that, Aletta went to wash her hands after putting away the cleaning tools.

First of all, she wet her hands with the mysterious magical tool that spouted water and

applied the green chemicals that could produce bubbles.

As she rubbed her hands together, she heeded the owner's instructions to wash under her nails and between her fingers.

[...Un. It's clean.]

Her hands were completely clean after washing.

With this, all that's left was to clean the kitchen after dinner and her work would be done.

[...I wonder what's for dinner today.]

When she thought about it, her stomach grumbled loudly.

That day's lunch was a sandwich that was made more than required when a Halfling ordered it for a take-away.



All three had different fillings, they were delicious as usual, but there were not much in terms of quantity.

Aletta was a young teenage girl that had not finished growing.

Although she did not eat as much as a Halfling, she still ate quite a lot.

That's why Aletta whose stomach was completely empty immediately went to the kitchen.

[Owner! I finished cleaning the dining room!]

She called to the owner who was cooking at the kitchen.

[Ou. You must be tired. The food's just finished.]

The owner looked at her and finished his cooking just as calculated.

Divide 2 portions of noodles that were just boiled evenly into deep bowls filled with white soup of clear, pale yellow colour.

Top the noodles with small shrimps and pork with vegetables stir-fry, and it's complete.

[Alright. The specially-made Tanmen noodles are finished.]

Wafting in the air was the warm scent of soup with a little spice.



...Kiyururi

[Au...]

The owner laughed at the blushing Aletta whose stomach grumbled loudly in response to the soup's smell.

[Okay, our stomachs are empty, so let's dig in.]

[Ye, yes!]

The two headed to the dining room and went to a suitable seat.

[Well then, itadakimasu.]

[Yes...Great God that protects the demons... thank you for bringing me food...]

As usual, the two prayed before their meal and started to eat as soon as possible.

The owner scooped the soup to his mouth with his spoon and nodded to the usual taste.

[Un. It's the usual instant ramen.]

It was a taste that he had eaten since he was a kid.

His cooking skill had gone up a lot since then and he had eaten a lot of authentic ramen, but he thought that this was also delicious.

(I guess this could be called delicious? Ma, I used a lot of extravagant ingredients after all.)

While thinking such a thing, the owner continued to eat his ramen and started on his small shrimps and pork lard stir-fried vegetables.

Chinese-style stir-fried vegetables that he learned in the old days when he worked at a Chinese restaurant.

The owner still firmly remembered the basics of keeping the fire uniform and not forgetting that the oil was alive.

Then the ramen was finished in a blink of eye.

Aletta also enjoyed her Tanmen noodles.

First, she started eating the stir-fried vegetables on top.

(A, this... is delicious!)

Every time Aletta brought the vegetables to her mouth with a fork, she was surprised

by the delicious taste.

Stir-fried vegetables with small shrimps containing the flavor of soup stock and rich pork lard, and spicy seeds sprinkled on top.

Something pale yellow and crunchy, something black and almost transparent.

She was familiar with the dark green and bitter vegetables, pale green leafy vegetables, and the thin, white, transparent vegetables.

There were also familiar vegetables like Caryute and Oranie.

All of the vegetables were properly cooked while having good moisture and texture.

Every time she chewed, the juice of the crispy vegetables mixed with the taste of pork lard and shrimps making a wonderful combination in her mouth.

Aletta fell in love with that taste in an instant.

(Also, this noodle!)

She couldn't ignore the noodles and soup beneath the vegetables.

It was different from the "pasta" and "spaghetti" served in the restaurant, this noodles were thin and curly.

They were slippery when she twirled them with her fork, and because of the slipperiness, the spiced soup was well entwined.

And the soup.

It was also different from the soup served in the restaurant, but the balance between the taste and the spices used was solid and still delicious.

Ingredients, noodles and soup. These three combined together and became a dish named Tanmen noodles.

...If there was only one complaint,

(A, it's gone...)

That amount of food was gone in an instant.

Honestly, she was unsatisfied even though she ate a full bowl.

Especially since she worked hard from morning to night, she was hungrier than usual.

[...Would you like a second helping?]

Feeling sorry about it, the owner asked Aletta who was staring forlornly at her empty bowl.

[E!? Is that okay?]

[Ou. I didn't eat much today, so I'm still hungry. There are two packs of noodles left. I think I'll finish them today... what do you think?]

[Of course I want it!]

Aletta nodded enthusiastically to the owner's question.

Her stomach was far from full.

She was convinced as soon as another bowl of Tanmen noodles was offered.

[Okay. Next I'll use eggs instead...]

The owner nodded to Aletta and got up to make a second serving of Tanmen noodles.

After the fierce battle during the day, they quietly indulged on Tanmen noodles at night.

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1. Tan-men (タンメン) is ramen soup noodle with stir fried pork and vegetables, and it's one of the quickest ramen you can make easily at home! Inspired by the Japanese drama, Midnight Diner.

CHAPTER 33

HORS D'OEUVRE



Halfling adventurer, Ted was restlessly waiting for his phantom dish.

[Still not yet~, still not yet~]

While swinging his legs, Ted asked impatiently while holding his stomach.

When he came to the otherworld dining hall 7 days ago, he was so surprised to see a lot of his fellow brethren that he spent a lot of his money due to his excitement.

Because of that, even though his stomach was empty, his wallet was also empty.

This time, he borrowed the money from his companions to order “that” and the drink that came with the food.

Yes, Ted ordered the phantom cuisine that he heard from his fellow Halflings “7 days ago” at the restaurant.

As one dish, it was the most expensive dish at the restaurant, but at the same time it also had the most amount.

It took a lot of time and labour, and it was not ordinarily listed in the menu, so he needed to ask for “reservation” to eat it the next time he came to the restaurant.

(The owner, so to speak, was able to make it if the reservation was made 2 days before, but since the restaurant was only available once in 7 days, I need to make reservation 7 days before.)

Therefore, as Halflings were too curious to stay in the same place for more than 3 days, it was a phantom dish that was only heard of from other customers.

Still, his glutton predecessors who managed to withstand it were great.

He looked up the map of the results of his investigations and he found out that nearly half of 100 Halflings discussed about it.

There were two doors where the distance between them were only 7 days on foot.

By using the road connecting those two doors, Halflings finally got the opportunity to eat that phantom dish.

That cuisine was able to match the Halflings’ palate and very much satisfy their curiosity and stomach.

After that, when the Halflings at the Eastern Continent used the opportunity to use those two doors, they started to discuss about that dish.

Yes indeed, Ted just discovered about that opportunity while adventuring with his colleagues and he ordered that dish...

[Sorry to keep you waiting. It’s 2 sets of hors d’oeuvre.]

[Hyahoo! It’s finally here!]

Hors d’oeuvre. It’s the phantom dish which was an assortment of a variety of food as much as the amount of fingers on both hands. {TN: I think it means there’re 10 of them}

[Ooo... this is awesome...]

Carried by the owner were hors d'oeuvre placed on a mysterious plate not made of metal, wood or pottery with partitions between the foods so that they were not mixed up.

Through the transparent lid, it still looked hot and deliciously made and tempted Ted.

In fact he really wanted to eat it now. He wanted to eat it together with the beer that he ordered.

[Well then, I'm going back home. Thank you!]

[No. Thank you for your patronage.]

But Ted endured the temptation and left the shop.

[All right! Let's hurry back home! Before it gets cold!]

He ran while being careful not to destroy the content of his baggage.

In order to buy this hors d'oeuvre, he borrowed the money from his friend. Specifically, it was the same amount as the price of the food.

That was why Ted hurried back to his colleagues to fulfill the promise he made when borrowing the money.

In a camp site with a strong tent stretched out to protect from rain, a party of adventurers were preparing their camp while waiting for their friend who was acquiring their food.

[...Really, where the heck does that idiot Ted go to get food?]

It may be because of hunger or irritation, Gallius the dwarf warrior with full body heavy metal armor stamped his short legs on the ground.

[Don't be like that. It's thanks to Ted that today's trip is going well. Perhaps, he has various ideas.]

The leader of the party, Albert who came from a knight household wearing leather armor with metal plates on various key points of the body and a magical sword gifted from his family hanging from his waist soothed the dwarf.

[Fun, I don't think he has such advanced ideas...]

Admonished by Albert, Gallius silently snorted as per his usual habit.

Gallius wouldn't admit Ted's achievements.

Ted's proposal that was called the "hors d'oeuvre highway" among the Halflings was certainly a tremendous shortcut.

Although there were problems of going through animal trails and hazardous places, usually it would take more or less half a month.

[Maa, indeed it's thanks to Ted that this trip is going well, isn't it fine?

Actually I know that Ted is familiar with this journey, but I do not think that it's to this extent.]

The demon fighter Zack who had hard and red scaly body agreed with Albert.

He knew that Halflings, including Ted, possessed good knowledge about this kind of travel as well as hand dexterity, but he never thought it was to this extent.

[...Anyway, why did Ted tell us to camp here tonight? Is there something here?]

Wearing a thin cloak of elven magic above her ordinary clothes and a mithril rapier hanging from her waist was Lydia, a half-elf magician that hailed from the Forest Capital.

There were no dangerous monsters around, the ground was dry and there was a water source nearby, it was a pretty good camping place.

However the sun had not set yet when they arrived there, and if they hurried they could have arrived at a nearby town by sunset.

Nevertheless, Ted insisted on camping there.

Thanks to Ted, the journey advanced quickly so they were willing to listen to his willfulness, but it was still strange nonetheless.

[Well, what do you think? Ted earlier said "I will give you a feast, so lend me money!" and took 6 silver coins from me.]

The woman placating Lydia's doubts was Sasha, a miko serving the God of Water with straight black hair and wearing clothing of onmyouji of the Western Continent.

...Ted's eyes were serious even though there was no use of money in a place where there was no house.

[[[[Feast?]]]]

Sure enough, the other 4 people tilted their head in doubt after hearing that phrase.

Their location was a camping place without any housing around them. There was no way that a feast could be acquired in such a place.

[...Perhaps there's a rumor of something delicious that was only available around here?]

After thinking about it for a moment, Albert told them the only thing that he could come up with.

[So why use the silver coins?]

[Saa... I don't know to that extent.]

After being questioned by Lydia, Albert abandoned his theory.

He had never heard that there was something unusual in that area.

If there was such a thing, it would only be chalked up as a rumor.

[Anyway, he said that he's going to acquire a treat... guys, what kind of treat will he bring?]

There was no conclusion until Ted came back anyway.

Thinking that, Zack tried to change the topic.

[Oh right, it's been a long time since I treated myself to meat and alcohol.]

Saying it naturally, Gallius stated something as if getting on the subject.

Fatty meat with alcohol.

Those two combinations were a great treat for any time of the day.

Another recent rumour among the dwarves was a new, delicious alcohol with strong taste.

He was given a cup from a dwarf he met on his last journey, he thought that it was already perfect the way it was.

[Well, you're always like that every time. This is why dwarves...

I want to eat fresh vegetables. After all, young elf beans are delicious this time of year.]

While opposing Gallius' words, Lydia gave out her own opinion.

Even though her parents were elves, she was born as a half-elf due to being a changeling {TN: refer to the pudding chapter}, and when she was still living at her hometown, the Forest Capital, her magic power was weaker compared to the other elves living there and she had shorter live span, so she left.

It had been almost 10 years since she left, she was now used to eating meat and fish compared to when she had just left, but the taste of her hometown's food was unforgettable and even now she still remembered sometimes.

Especially since there were few people growing elf beans at the Eastern Continent.

[I guess for me its fresh fish. After all, the sea creatures are delicious...]

Sasha was also reminded the smell of the ocean of her fisherman hometown. Unless it's a city near the ocean, seafood circulating in the market tasted greasy and were not fresh.

Her favourite food was a hot and spicy red seafood soup that needed to be boiled for half a day. She had not eaten it since she left her hometown located at the Sea Country for training and becoming an adventurer.



[A feast huh... that reminds me, back when I was a kid I always looked forward to eat cake on celebration days.]

Albert also remembered the distant days.

Mix flour with eggs, milk and plenty of valuable honey and bake it. It's so sweet that it's as if melting sugar was sprinkled on the teeth.

It was so rarely eaten even for Albert who was the third son of a nobleman, so he remembered that he always looked forward to eating it for days before celebration days.

[As for me, I prefer eggs. That and the freshly fried croquettes sold at the Capital City's food stall I often visited back when I was a kid were also delicious.]



And finally Zack told them what he thought as a feast.

The taste that he ate back when he lived at the Empire's Capital City, which was one of the few countries where the demon tribe could live normally.

Egg dishes which could be eaten on celebration days and fried croquettes which were made by mashing boiled Baron's fruit and covering it with flour before deep-frying it. {TN: potatotes.}

Those two tastes were still unforgettable for Zack.

[...If you ask me this, everything is delicious.]

Albert found it to be funny when five people discussed what they thought as a “feast”.

[All of us come from different places.]

While nodding to Albert’s words, Sasha said simply.

They set up an adventurer team and had been active for 5 years.

They repeated new encounters and farewells, becoming six men party after adding Ted to their team.

Six people that were born and raised in different places, and things that came to their minds when they thought of feast were also different.

To that, those 5 people laughed a little...

[Thank you for waiting! I brought it! The special feast!]

They greeted Ted who came back and their banquet began.

Five pairs of eyes were zeroed on it.

What they were seeing was a feast that Ted acquired from an unknown place.

It was placed on a flat stone.

[...Oi oi, am I dreaming? Ted, what kind of magic that you used to procure this?]

On behalf of the rest, Gallius asked Ted.

[Well, the detail is a secret, but if I have to put it in words... a transfer system?]

Ted said something vague.

The location of the “door of hors d’oeuvres” had to be kept as a secret among the Halflings otherwise they could not get hors d’oeuvre anymore.

As it was a promise made between the Halflings, Ted did not want to reveal the truth.

[So, what is this? It seems to be an assortment of various foods...]

Lydia asked Ted, seeing the various types of foods piled on inside of a strangely thin vessel of unknown material.

[Oh yeah. This is called hors d'oeuvres. Various ingredients like meat, fish and vegetables were used on this one dish. It's a meal fitting for a feast.]

As soon as he was asked the question, Ted said while laughing cheerfully.

[So, this is what you call beer. It's delicious when it's cold. A, I also bought whiskey for Gallius.]

And Ted pulled lid of brown beer glass bottle with his knife and poured it equally to each glass, and at the same time he also handed a small bottle of brown alcohol to Gallius that was around the same size as his palm.

[Now, let's eat. After all, freshly made food is the best.]

Finally, Ted distributed paper plates that he received from the owner with a white fork made of strange material and opened the transparent lid covering the dish.

Gently, the smell of freshly cooked food drifted around.

All five people swallowed their spit.

Everyone desired to eat it as soon as possible.

[Well then, it's time to eat.]

Albert said that on behalf of the party and all five people reached for the food at the same time.

[Hoho!? Isn't this the new alcohol!?!]

Gallius drank a mouthful of the alcohol that Ted handed and exclaimed in surprise.

That alcohol had a strong taste and a unique scent.

The taste of the liquor was even better than the one he had before.

[For liquor, its best paired with meat!]

While thankful for the alcohol, Gallius reached for it.

Chunks of deep fried chicken meat with plenty of oil, and deep-fried food packed full

with minced meat and Oranie.

He wanted to eat those two.

Every time he bit the chicken, plenty of fat-filled ginger flavoured meat juices burst from the coating inside his mouth.



The minced meat also had plenty of meat juices. Combined with the sweetness of Oranie and flavor of its fragrant coating made it irresistible.



And when the meat juice spread inside his mouth, he gulped down the alcohol.

The strong alcohol rinsed the taste from his mouth and it was delicious.

No matter how many times he tried this combination, he would never get tired of it.

[A, Gallius, for the Karaage and Minced Cutlet, it's best if you squirted the yellow fruit's juice on them. Also, it's delicious when you pour the black sauce on top of Minced Cutlet.]

[Mu...muumuu!?!]

He followed Ted's advice and squirted the yellow fruit's juice... and ate.

A refreshing sour taste joined the food that was called Karaage.

The black sauce he poured on top of the deep-fried food called Minced Cutlet.

By adding those, the taste of the food elevated even further.

[It's delicious!]

Gallius drank a lot while eating the food one after another.

His movement would not stop until all the food was gone.

Sasha was eating fish all the while.

(This fish is very tasty, but what kind of fish is this?)

It was a taste that was not familiar to Sasha.

It had fat like red fish, but it smelled like white fish.

The colour was also close to pink, like a combination of red fish and white fish.

It matched well with the refreshing milky sour sauce.



(Even so... where does this fish come from...)

While eating, she was pondering of the fish's origin when she heard Ted's voice.

[Otto! Isn't this schripe {TN: shrimp}!? Hee, so schripe are not just fried or made into doria, but can also have spicy seasoning.]

(Schripe!?)

In response, Sasha reached for the same thing that Ted was eating.

Square shaped, it seemed to be wrapped in something and was deep-fried.



She brought it to her mouth with a fork.

[...!? Uwaa!? Isn't this really schripe!?]

She was surprised when she encountered the taste from back when she was still at her hometown.

What spread inside her mouth was the taste of fresh schripe with no smell.

When she chewed on it, the thick spicy sauce spread with the fragrant flavor of its shell, reminding Sasha of her hometown.

[Aa, so this is what you meant...]

She unintentionally said due to the taste.

It reminded her of her hometown and was a taste that she had never eaten ever since she left.

Sasha no longer had any intention of giving this food to anyone else.

It was elf bean.

It was carefully boiled elf beans sprinkled with salt.



(I never expect to see elf beans here.)

In her heart, Lydia was surprised by its taste but she carried on putting elf beans one by one to her mouth from the pod.

Modestly salted, it was the taste of young elf beans.

It had a fascinating wonderful harmony with the ale.

There was no alcohol at the Forest Capital and elf beans could not be obtained outside of elven settlements.

This combination was unknown to her until now and she did not think that they would fit together so much.

(If it's like this, I could eat this as much as I want...)

However if there was a problem, the amount of elf beans was not much.

The elf beans were finished as soon as possible.

(What a disappointment, this is the only dinner for today...)

After eating delicious elf beans, she did not feel like eating meat or fish.

Regrettably, she thought that she was finished eating when she heard it.

[U~n, it's miso on the Cule after all.] {TN: cucumber}

Lydia's pointed ears caught Ted's words.

(Miso?)

She heard something she had not heard before and went to check it.

Ted was chewing a stick-shaped Cule with brown paste on it.



It was an unusual sight seeing as Ted did not prefer vegetables.

(Miso, might it be...?)

Ted was rubbing a brown paste on the fresh Cule.

(It has a strong smell... but it's not too pungent...)

She carried it to her mouth after confirming that there was no meat or fish smell from the brown paste.

With a crunching sound, she chewed on the Cule.

[What's this!? It's delicious!]

Lydia said in surprise.

It's an unknown salty taste, but there was more than that.

Various vegetables were fermented, and the flavor of elf beans was blended in the strong tasting mixture.

It had strong saltiness and when combined with the pale Cule that contained plenty water, it became a feast.

Furthermore, its taste was tailored for the ale and was the best thing she ever ate even when counting her childhood at the Forest Capital.

[.....]

From there, Lydia silently ate the Cule.

She must hurry. If the others noticed the taste, her share would decrease.

(Ho, this is a little sweet... Un, this sausage is delicious.)

What Albert reached out first was a pale brown food with thick skewer pierced through it.



The pig intestine sausage full of meat juice. It was wrapped in soft and slightly sweet fabric made with plenty of eggs and milk that was lightly fried in contrast of the chewy texture of the sausage.

The combination of the sausage's taste of spice and meat fat with the slightly sweet wrapping was compatible.

In addition, adding the tasty sour red sauce and spicy yellow sauce also changed the overall taste. The food was also compatible with Ted's ale.

(Un, this is delicious...)

He ate two, and then three.

The small fried food was finished in a few mouthful and some gulps of the ale.

Albert enjoyed the faint sweetness.

It was such a moment.

[A, this is rum raisin sandwich... un, it's sweet. This matches well with alcohol too.]

Albert's ears captured Ted's words.

(What, he said sweet?)

He glanced at what Ted was eating and found it.

Brown hard baked goods with white cream and dried berries sandwiched between it.



Seeing as Ted was eating it using his hands, Albert learned from it.

(O, oo! Sweet! This is sweet and delicious!)

With that taste, Albert's eyes widened in surprise.

The dried berries had sweet and bitter taste while the white cream tasted like sweet milk.

The baked sweets that sandwiched it had faint sweetness, but it also had the savoury taste of wheat that complimented the sweet taste of berries and cream.

The berries also had a complimentary alcoholic taste.

(I feel that this is even more delicious than the sweets that I ate some time ago... one more...)

Satisfied with the confectionary's taste, Albert reached for one and then two of it.

[Oo, this egg, it's superb!]

Zach first reached out for the baked eggs.

An omelet cut into bright yellow, bite-sized pieces.



It was mixed with powdered cheese, pink smoked meat and dark green vegetables. Those toppings were superb with the soft taste of eggs.

[This is... really delicious.]

While moistening his mouth with ale, Zack admired it.

Ted brought a feast that he did not know where it came from.

All five of them including Zack were hooked on the food the moment they laid their eyes on it.

(Now, next is...)

[Aa, Zack, this croquette is similar to the ones sold at the Capital! It's really delicious

when eaten with ketchup.]

[O!? There's croquette!?!]

Hearing those words, Zack searched for it and pierced it with his fork as soon as he found it.

Round and lightly fried croquette.

He poured the red sauce on its side and bit it.

[What is this!? It's croquette but its taste is different!?!]

Zack exclaimed in surprise due to the different taste.

A piping hot croquette with sour red sauce poured on it.

A slight amount of milk was mixed in and there was smoothness that he had never tasted before.

And finally, there was cheese.

In the center of this croquette, there was melted cheese wrapped by the Baron's fruit.



[What is this!? Ted, where did you get this one!?!]

Feeling amazement and joy, he gushed at Ted who was eating his food with fervor.

Zack appreciated it. That day, he met his food of the day.

All five people were very satisfied. Ted brought his advice about hors d'oeuvres.

The party was smiling peacefully.

...A little later, there was a scuffle among them.

[Oi!? Wait a moment, I only ate eggs and croquettes!?!]

The first person to notice was Zack.

He enjoyed the eggs and croquettes, and when he tried to extend his hand to try other cuisine, they were almost finished.

[E!? I've only eaten fish!? Zack, you've eaten all the croquettes!?!]

[What!? There were fried sausages!? Why did you eat it all!?!]

[So, sorry... Gallius! You ate all the meat dishes!? Why!?!]

[I'm all good now... You! Don't you dare put your hands on my Cule!]

Yes, everyone was thinking like this.

Let's eat other dishes. If they were satisfied with eating now.

As a result, when all members were satisfied to a certain extent, only one or two pieces of each food were left.

Rough air of dispute was flowing among them.

Everyone thought like this.

The food was eaten by their friends without permission.

A gap was born between five people with strong bonds.

Party dissolution.

The crisis was about to come.

[Mo~, everyone ate delicious food, so don't fight.]

Breaking the tension was the relaxed voice of the Halfling.

[You said that right... Ted?]

Albert tried to argue with Ted and noticed it.

How funny.

Ted, who was the greediest and should be the one who ate the most, didn't join the fray.

It couldn't be.

Rather, he should make more fuss than anyone else.

Apparently the other 4 people noticed it.

All 5 of them watched Ted at the same time...

[[[[[Ted!?!]]]]]

They were surprised.

[U~n. It's really delicious after all. As expected of a meal that costs 3 silver coins each.]

While nodding satisfactorily, Ted enjoyed the hors d'oeuvres.

...He bought himself a whole serving of his own.

[It's nice to be able to eat 10 types of food all at once. It might be a good idea if I bought another serving.]

As he nodded, Ted finished his plates one after another.

Ted was very satisfied with the hors d'oeuvre that was rich in variety and compatible with beer.

...Not aware that the gazes of his party members were getting colder and colder.

And when half of the hors d'oeuvre disappeared into Ted's stomach and only half of it remained, their hearts became one.

And Ted tilted his head seeing their state.

[E? Are? What's wrong everyone? Everyone has a scary face. Ee, wait!? Why are you eating my food!? You can't! This is all mine! That's why, don't!?!]

That evening, Ted's screams reverberated in the camping grounds.

By the way the menu is:

1. Karaage
2. Mini Minced Cutlet
3. Grilled salmon with mayonnaise
4. Ebi Chili spring roll
5. Assorted edamame
6. Morokyu (Cucumber stick with miso paste)
7. Mini corn dog
8. Raisin butter sandwich
9. Spinach and ham cheese omelet
10. Deep fried potato with cheese

CHAPTER 34

ICE CREAM SODA



One day, at the corner of Sand country, a pair of man and woman was walking side by side.

[I think older brother is somewhat a late bloomer.]

Wearing magic cloaks and producing slight cold air to protect themselves from the merciless heat of the sun, Lana the princess of the Sand Country told that to her older brother Sharif.

[If, if you say so. The other party is the princess of Eastern Continent you know.

There're preparations needed to leave the homeland and getting married at the Sand Country of Western Continent.

That is why I first set up emissaries to set up trade alliance with the empire.]

Against Lana's brother... in the Sand Country, there were few people who did not mince their words and were able to speak pointedly to him, so Sharif gave his excuses to Lana.

[That's not the problem. It's you yourself. I don't think you have the spirit to win that woman's heart.

To start with, you establish connection with the other country, and as a proof that the ties were genuine, you take the princess of that country as his bride.

Indeed, it is a sound logic; it's not a bad story if the Empire's royal bloodline could get connected with the bloodline of the country's royalty.

Anyway, it wouldn't be a story of a marriage if her sickness is not healed.

However as you know, unfortunately the national powers between both countries are too different. Even though our country is influential in the Western Continent, the Empire is one of the superpowers in the Eastern continent.

If your beautiful maiden said no, probably your willfulness will pass.

That's why you should get close to her before her illness got healed.]

While enjoying her conversation with her brother whose wisdom was different from other noble girls of her age and the mediator of harem, Lana spun her words as if to remind him.

For the royalty, the circumstances of the country were top priority; especially the marriage of the crown prince born from the legal wife, the intention of the person himself was irrelevant.

However if the intention was neglected, the marriage would be unfortunate for each sides.

That was why they should make efforts to love and be loved.

So far, there were so many women being presented to Sharif, but there was something definitely missing as none of them could attract him.

Lana knew about that.

Lana was different from Sharif who was a child of the legal wife... the princess was the child of a concubine who was originally a court magician when the king fell in love at first sight with her.

The Sand Country which emphasized in magic was excellent in terms of magical prowess, and it was a country where people were able to succeed disregarding their gender as long as they had sufficient magical knowledge.

While Lana's mother was a lower nobility, she was one of the two that was permitted to work as court magicians because they possessed excellent magic skill and talent among their generations. She eventually won the king's heart and gave birth to Lana, truly a person who was successful in life.

That mother sometimes served as a court teacher who taught magical knowledge to her daughter and Sharif.

Their relationship was not love between man and woman. Even though they had different mothers, they learned from the same teacher so they got along with each other.

[Well... oops, it seems we have arrived.]

When he tried to form his words, they had arrived at their destination.

A black door with a picture of a cat drawn on it located at the sandy ocean.

It was the place the two of them were aiming for, floating in the hot weather like fireworks.

[Well, let's get inside.]

[Ok. The desert during the day is too hot.]

The two opened the door.

The sound of bell echoed and cold air leaked out.

[Fuu... well, this is nice.]

Feeling the breeze, Lana reflexively sighed and went through the door with her older brother.

[Welcome.]

[Hello. I'll be in your assistance.]

Inside the door was a room as cold as the night, Lana greeted the owner femininely.

Lana who was skilled in interactions knew that with her rounded feminine body and clear facial features, she looked pretty if she acted femininely.

[Well then... onii-sama¹, this place is free.]

[A, aa... tha, that is right.]

She stopped her older brother from sitting at his usual unobtrusive seat at the corner and called him to seat at the table beside his crush's usual seat.

[Excuse me.]

He walked elegantly between the customers and went to his seat.

[Welcome. Here's the menu. Well then, please take your time.]

[Ee, thank you.]

While receiving the menu, iced water and hot towel from the demon waitress wearing a costume of another world, she cheerfully said her thanks.

[Well, you're still looking at her, huh.]

After sending the waitress away, Lana talked to Sharif, returning to the way she talked before without taking her eyes away from her menu.

[Aa... that is so.]

Sharif replied in a practiced manner while the two of them perused the drinks section of the menu.

[Well, Lana? Have you decided?]

[Please wait a little more... u~mu.]

Unlike Lana who was a little troubled in choosing her order, Sharif decided to order his usual.

Though Lana being Lana had generally decided what to order.

Lana's favourite drink when she came to this restaurant.

(Well, today's ice cream soda... what to choose.)

Ice cream soda.

That was Lana's preferred drink, a dessert.

However, this was the kind of trouble every time she came.

(For the soda... ginger ale, cola, orange, grape... no, of course its melon soda.)

She inspected each selection while thinking of the soda that was included in the classification that had unique stimulus that stung the throat.

When ordering ice cream soda in this restaurant, one could choose the soda and the ice cream.

In what combination should she order it.

Every time she visited, Lana was always troubled by it.

(Today... fumu. Let's go with soft ice cream.)

After her little pondering, she decided to order melon soda with soft ice cream.

Among other patterns, it's a combination that she often ordered.

[I have decided, older brother.]

[I see... excuse me! I wish to order!]

In response to his sister's decision, Sharif called the waitress loudly.

[Ye~s! Are you ready to order?]

[Aa, I'll have coffee float. Make the coffee stronger and sweeter.]



[I want ice cream soda with melon soda and soft ice cream.]



Sharif and Lana placed their order nearly at the same time.

[Ok! Please wait a moment!]

Nodding, the waitress retreated to the kitchen to inform the owner of the order.

And then, it was delivered shortly.

[Thank you for waiting! Your orders of coffee float and ice cream soda.]

With a light sound, she placed the drinks that were served in beautiful glass cups on the table.

(Umu. It's beautiful as always.)

Lana thought that the contrast between the bright green soda inside the transparent cup reminiscent of the palace courtyard with the ice cream as pure white as salt was beautiful.

[Well then, please enjoy.]

The waitress went away to pick up orders from other customers and Lana started on her ice cream soda as soon as possible.

(The first bite is ice cream only.)

Lana started to drink her ice cream soda according to the way she decided.

First of all, she used her spoon to scoop out the soft smooth mountain and carried it to her mouth.

(Un. This soft ice cream is as good as always.)

With the cold sweet taste spreading momentarily inside her mouth, Lana smiled satisfactorily.

The "ice creams" she received from Sharif had different varieties and were all interesting and delicious, but soft ice cream was even more delicious.

Soft ice creams had smoothness and softness that were not found in normal ice creams.

A soft, sweet and cold soft ice cream made of dairy.

Because of its softness, it was easy to melt therefore it couldn't be eaten unless she visited this restaurant and she couldn't bring it home even though she used the strange other world ice that was colder than ordinary ice and did not leave any water when it melted.

Therefore, she decided to bring ice cream back home and ate soft ice cream at the restaurant.

That was Lana's usual option.

(Umu, umu... next is soda.)

After enjoying a spoonful of ice cream, Lana started on her soda.

She sucked the soda from the cup with the straw.

What spread inside her mouth next was the freshness of soda with its stinging sensation.

Unlike soft ice cream, she could taste the exciting sweetness that had fruit flavor.

(Aa, it's delicious as usual... to not understand the quality of this flavor, that brother of mine sure has a loser disposition.)

While rolling the melon soda inside her mouth, she observed her brother who was enjoying his coffee float.

It seemed that her brother was no good at drinking beverages containing this "carbonic acid".

So to say, he did not like the stinging feeling inside the mouth.

At first, he was interested in ice cream soda when Lana ordered it the first time she visited the restaurant. But after he tried it, he never ordered it ever again.

However, carbonic acid was very tasty to Lana, so Sharif's warning was ignored.

(From my point of view, the mixed flavor of sweet and bitter in caffa is not compatible.)

On the other hand, Lana disliked the traditional caffa drink of Sand Country.

She did not care for that bitterness anyhow.

It's the same for the caffa called "coffee" in the other world, and Lana never ordered

his favourite coffee float.

(Well then... next is soon.)

And after she finished enjoying soft ice cream and melon soda, Lana started to fully enjoy ice cream soda.

She scooped soft ice cream and brought it to her mouth, and then she immediately sucked the melon soda.

The smooth sweetness of soft ice cream and the exciting sweetness of melon soda.

When these two mixed together, they created harmony.

(Un. This taste.)

This taste is the real pleasure of ice cream soda.

Lana was satisfied with the taste and entered the final phase.

(After all, this is the last one.)

Then, she put a hand on the precious taste of ice cream soda.

She spread ice cream over melon soda, and then she brought the mixture to her mouth.

The taste of soft ice cream sticking to the melon soda.

And when both taste mixed, the taste of chaos.

(Ice cream soda is fully enjoyed in these 3 steps.)

Lana finished her ice cream soda and put down her spoon with a satisfied smile.

‘Chirinchirin’, almost at the same time, the door opened.

When Sharif who was watching the door as he enjoyed his coffee float stretched his body to see who came inside, Lana knew who it was that just entered.

[Welcome!]

[Ee, kon’nichiwa, Aletta-san.]

It was low manner to treat common person politely while having noble stature.

That was the person that Sharif had a crush on, the Empire princess Adelheid entered the restaurant and noticed Lana and co.

[Lana-san. Gokigen uruwashuu²]

Seeing the smiling face of her close friend of similar age, Adelheid greeted her.

[Gokigen uruwashuu. Hey, you too, brother.]

[U, umu... that, err. You seem to be in fine health today.]

Lana greeted back with a soft smile and urged her brother.

...For the time being, since he was able to say that, she could say that he made progress.

[Why don't you join our seat if you don't mind? We can talk about the Empire.]

[Ee, very well. Well then, excuse me.]

Her expression lightened by Lana's words who became her friend in this restaurant. Sharif's tension increased when Adelheid sat opposite of him.

[Today I'll have chocolate parfait...]



[Then I'll have cola float... nii-sama, are you alright?]



[A, aa... don't worry. My body has cooled down so I'll order Viennese coffee.]



(Geez, if half of his usual dignity can be shown, he could seduce her already.)

She smiled wryly at her nervous older brother.

(Maa, I think it's a lot of progress already since they could somewhat talk together.)

While thinking that, Lana chatted with Adelheid... her prospective future sister-in-law.

1. Here, the way Lana calls Sharif is different. Usually she called him 兄君 which is ani-gimi. But here, she called him お兄様 which is onii-sama, a much formal way.
2. Some sort of greeting. Like gokigen'yoh.

CHAPTER 35

CARPACCIO



The “Sea Continent” spreading between the Eastern Continent and Western Continent was the only route connecting both continents, yet at the same time was a danger zone where many monsters lived.

Extending to the south of the continent, where powerful monsters were crowded by the “Sea Dragon King” who ruled as the “Blue Emperor”, still every year, the amount of ship who managed to cross over and reach the shore never exceeded the amount of fingers on both hands.

The sirens were one of the monster tribes that lived in the islands that dotted the Sea Continent.

Siren was a monster with the appearance of a beautiful girl with bird wings growing from her back and had bird-like legs.

The magical charmed contained in their songs attracted those who heard their singing to the sea, a dangerous monster who sank countless ships.

That kind of species.

And it was a certain summer day when a young male siren Arius, who had reached the time to leave his nest, decided to go to the “Chimera Killer Island”.

To begin with, it was the proposal of a female Siren named Iris who hatched on the same day as him.

[Hey, Arius! Since it's time for leave the nest, why don't we go to the Chimera Killer Island?]

[The Chimera Killer Island... isn't that the place my grandmother told me not to approach because it's too dangerous!]

Iris began to talk about the location of an island where dangerous beings lived, and Arius peeled his eyes.

Grandmother... according to her who was the eldest siren and accumulated the most knowledge, in that island there lived “Chimera Killer”.

Chimera Killer. A terrifying human who dominated the island by defeating the powerful monster Chimera which was originally the ruler of the island by himself.

If a siren who was treated as a nuisance by the humans encountered the Chimera Killer, surely their life would be forfeit.

Originally, the relationship between humans and sirens was not good.

They were not actively hostile, but for humans especially those who lived by the sea, they were considered to be troublesome monsters.

Sirens were feared as beautiful female monsters who sunk ships with their singing voice and ate drowning men, but that was not true.

Sure, their singing contained magical charm that could attract humans and other creatures, and all of them were viewed as girls because their appearances looked delicate when flying in the sky and there were few differences between men and women.

In case they were attacked by humans with hostility, they could use their powers to protect themselves.

However, they don't eat humans. He would never want to eat them.

Grandmother said that the story may arise from the fact that sirens ate fresh raw fish without using any fire to cook it.

It was abnormal for humans to eat fish without cooking it using fire.

With such circumstances, sirens had lived in their islands for hundreds of years without being involved with humans.

Iris' proposal contradicted it.

[All right. But think about it, it was long before we were hatched when the Chimera Killer appeared, right?]

Iris told her thoughts to the reluctant Arius.

[That's... that's right...]

[If that's the case, won't the Chimera Killer become weaker with age, and maybe he had already died due to illness or something else?

Then, won't it be fine to do a little inspection? Since chimera was a strong monster, its domain might be a good island.]

Iris made more reasons.

[First of all, we can observe from above, if it's no good we could just fly and run away. Chimera Killer is a human right? Surely he couldn't fly.]

[U, un. That's true...]

[Yoshi! Decided! Let's go since you agreed!]

And Arius took off as Iris pulled him.

Their destination was the Chimera Killer Island... a few months ago, the inhabitant of that island left it.

Then, as the sun reached its peak, both of them fluttered down from the sky.

[Hee... this is Chimera Killer Island... this is a pretty good location.]

[Chimera Killer... he doesn't seem to be here. That's good.]

Two of them circled the island from the sky and looked around the island for a human. After confirming that there was no one anywhere, they landed in front of a cave.

[I wonder if this is this the nest of the Chimera Killer...]

[There's no doubt that he lived here.]

There were signs that the Chimera Killer used the cave as his dwelling.

Under a light hole there was a large vessel to store rainwater and an incompatible wooden shelf along the stone wall.

At the corner of the cave, there was a bedding made of dried hay and next to it was a wooden chest that he must have brought with him when he came to this island.

Lines were engraved on the wall, probably to keep track of the day.

There were so many lines carved that the walls were filled with it and made them know just how long that human had lived there.

[Un? What is this? These lines were carved in a strange way.]

[Are? What is this?]

He was wondering why each six vertical lines were slashed by a diagonal line when Iris found something inside the wooden chest and brought it to Arius.

[Nee Arius, this, do you know what this is?]

As she said so, Iris took out a bag from inside the chest and showed the contents to Arius.

The things that were stored inside were glittering flat stones.

Most of them were silvers while a few golds were mixed inside.

[Aa, these are silver coins and gold coins. Humans use this to exchange various things.]

Arius was taught various things about humans from his grandmother and was familiar with their identities.

[Then... this letter is written in human language.]

There was also a comparatively new parchment that was rolled up inside the bag.

[Let me see...]

Arius read the letter out loud so that Iris could know the content.

“I’m leaving this to the person who found this after I leave. If you are an unfortunate person who drifted to this place, never abandon hope and survive. I had lived here for 20 years, always looking forward to “Satur’s day” that comes once every 7 days. This money is a gift from me to you. You should use it when you visit a door on the hill that appears once every 7 days. Hopefully you will be happy.

Alphonse Cromwell”

[...Satur’s day?]

Arius tilted his head to the words that he didn’t understand.

Was it something that was only known to humans?

It seemed to come once every 7 days.

[A door on the hill? There was nothing there wasn’t it?]

Iris also tilted her head.

After arriving on the island, both of them had circled the island and observed it from the sky.

So they knew the location of the hill that the letter mentioned.

However, there was no door on that hill.

[Un. Perhaps this Alphonse in the letter is the Chimera Killer.]

With a strange letter on hand, Arius pondered what to do now.

[So, what are we going to do? It seems that there're no dangerous monsters or Chimera Killer on this island for the time being though?]

[That's true... wait a minute, can we stay here for a while?]

After summarizing his idea, he answered Iris' question.

[Ok. Originally, I was looking for a place to make a new nest. This island seems to be a good location.]

Iris nodded as if it's natural and their discussion was concluded.

And after two days both of them settled in the island, "Satur's day" had arrived.

A black door had appeared instantly on a hill where there was nothing.

It was on the third morning they settled there when they found it.

[Why is there something like this here? It's not here yesterday.]

Arius found this door and brought Iris to see it.

Even though it was not there yesterday, a black door with a golden handle and a picture of a cat suddenly appeared.

[Perhaps today is "Satur's day" and this is the door mentioned in the letter...]

This was probably a magical door that was written in the letter.

He did not know what's beyond it since it's not mentioned in the letter.

[Let's enter it anyway! It looks interesting!]

[Un... maa, that's fine.]

After thinking a little about Iris' suggestion, Arius decided to go with it.

Anyway, if the letter was correct, there should something to look forward for on the other side of the door.

At least, it shouldn't be dangerous.

[Okay, I'll open it.]

Thinking to that point, Arius turned the door's handle.

'Chirinchirin', the door opened with a light bell sound and they both entered a room filled with brightness that felt different from daylight.

[A, good morning! It's still early, but welcome to Nekoya!]

A little girl with horns who was wiping on of the tables with a cloth noticed Arius and greeted cheerfully.

Her face did not show any fear of sirens and appeared to be welcoming.

[A, aa... what is this place?]

[Yes. This is a restaurant that serves food to customers. There are many demons who are customers too.]

The little girl... Aletta answered Arius' question without hesitation.

Sirens were also a kind of monster for her, but she did not mind now after serving ogres, lamias, faeries and lizardmen.

[I understand, so what kind of food do you want to order?]

To her question, Arius and Iris nodded to each other.

[Well, if that's the case... what kind of food do you serve?]

[Food, is it... there's a variety of items.]

Aletta felt a little troubled answering Arius.

There were so many food selections in this restaurant and Aletta did not know even half of them.

Also, many foreign foods were hard to explain. Especially for tribes that secluded themselves.

[Could you be more specific?]

[E, etto... a, that, that's right! If you can tell me what you want to eat, I can ask that to the owner!]

After being further questioned, Aletta suggested that.

Naturally, the owner knew all dishes served in the restaurant. Sometimes, he even cooked something that was not listed in the menu.

She was sure he could fulfill the request.

[Etto... then.]

[For me, I want fresh fish! Not baked or boiled, raw!]

Before Arius could say something, Iris interrupted.

[E!? You can eat raw fish!?... A, then, I'll ask the owner.]

Although she was surprised by Iris' answer, Aletta nodded and headed back to the owner who was preparing for customers who usually came at noon.

[Hey Iris, don't do that. Humans don't eat raw fish.]

[E? Is that so? How strange, even though it's delicious.]

To Arius' words, Iris tilted her head.

Iris did not think about anything in particular, she just ordered her favourite food.

[Moo...]

Anyway, it's too late to change anything.

Thinking that, Arius heaved a sigh.

Arius knew that humans could not make cuisine based on raw fish.

...He did not notice that it was based on "the common sense of his world".

Then after a while, Aletta came back and asked the two of them.

[Ano... there's a dish called carpaccio that used raw fish, is that okay?]

[E!? There is!?!]

It was Arius who was surprised.

He did not think that there was any.

[Un! Good! Please bring it soon!]

Again, Iris said that before Arius could say anything.

[Okay! Please wait a moment! I finished cleaning the tables there, so please be seated.]

Relieved, Aletta smiled and retreated to the kitchen.

Then, after a while.

[Sorry to keep you waiting.]

The human owner came and gently placed the plates in front of them.

Unique to raw fish, the bright red raw fish was sliced thinly with raw Oranie slices placed above the fish slices.



[It's tuna carpaccio. Please enjoy.]

While listening to the name of the dish, Arius' and Iris' eyes were nailed on it.

It was an unknown dish using raw fish. It looked very delicious.

As the owner left, both of them started to eat.

They pierced the fish slices using human forks and lifted it.

They would be disappointed if the fish was not fresh, but fortunately that was not the case.

The bright red colour shifted in their eyes, and both of them swallowed their saliva.

And... brought it to their mouth.

[[Delicious!?!]]

The fish had condensed flavor.

Every time they chewed, the umami overflowed.

The sauce used on the dish had unique saltiness and the sourness of unripe fruit.

When eating it separately, the pungent taste of Oranie was too strong, but when eaten together, there was harmony.

It's salty, a bit sour and had sharp spiciness... the taste of fish that wrapped them all spread inside the mouth.

The fish slices were not only fresh, but they were also bled and carved properly.

It was too refined to just call it sliced fish... its taste was suitable enough to call it a dish.

Both of them did not say anything.

They were too engrossed on eating the carpaccio

The pungent taste of Oranie and the sour sauce, and the taste of the fish itself.

They did not stop their hands even for a moment.

In an instant, their plates became empty.

[Dear customers, would you like a second helping?]

[[Give me!]]

They did not hesitate answering the owner's question.

[[Fuu~...]]

Eventually when they stopped their hands, their stomachs were filled with fish.

(The place written by Chimera Killer... I wonder if it's this place.)

And Arius realized why the Chimera Killer left the money.

Seated on his opposite... Iris was also satisfied.

And so Arius decided to seriously make the island their nest.

Iris wouldn't oppose. He's confident of that.

CHAPTER 36

HOTDOG



The gigantic tree which was his playground back during his childhood days 8 years ago still stood tall.

[...Oo! Today's Satur's day!]

Touichiro who just arrived a few days ago found a familiar black door on top of the tree and shouted in joy.

Eight years ago when he used this door with Aya... he had visited this place every day since he was often forgetful when "Satur's day" was.

And today thankfully, Touichiro "reunited" with the door.

[Okay, let's enter inside. Let's go, A...]

As he tried to extend his hand towards Aya... he remembered that there was no one beside him.

[...Aa, I'm alone now...]

He muttered silently and climbed the tree.

When he was a child, he always climbed this tree each time he had troubles and managed to reach the summit in a flash, he would sit on a branch that was so thick it wouldn't break even if several adults sat on it.

[The view here hasn't changed...]

As he reached the top, he turned his head to look at the mountains.

He could see the view of green mountains that stretched on forever and blue sky with white clouds from the tree top.

The view which still remained in his memory burned into his eyes.

[...Well, let's go.]

Regretting not being able to see the unchanging view with Aya, Touichiro went to fulfill his original purpose.

A black door with cat picture that was attached to the tree trunk.

He grasped its golden handle and turned it.

The sound of bell rang.

[Yaa, welcome... oya, are you perhaps Touichiro-san?]

The middle-aged man who greeted him was older than the one in his memory.

[Long time no see. Sorry to trouble you now, but I would like a hot dog and cola.]

While relieving that face to his memory, Touichiro immediately ordered.

[Okay... is it just for 1 person?]

[Aa, I came alone today, that's why I ask for hotdog for 1 person. Also, three of it to go please.]

Toichirou nodded to the owner's confirmation.

Yes, today he came alone... not with Aya, who was always together with him.

[...I understand. Please wait a moment.]

The owner didn't want to hear any more details and retreated back to the kitchen.

[Fuu... this place also doesn't change.]

He sat down on a seat and looked at his surroundings.

He saw figures of old regulars who didn't change with new familiar customers.

The customers were as usual... chaos.

Regardless whether they were men or women, when they visit this restaurant... they always enjoyed their food.

(If I think about it, it was here in this restaurant where I learned the wonders of the world.)

Yes, when he went to this restaurant, because he felt the wonders of his world through this other world and only knew his small hometown, he longed for the "outside" and went on a journey to increase his combat skills.

...Along with Aya who was a shrine maiden and became a senior priestess that worshiped the Earth God.

(Various things had occurred now that I think of it...)

As a warrior traveller, he left his hometown with Aya and went to the Eastern Continent. There was a lot of sight to see.

He fought dangerous monsters and sometimes almost died.

Sometimes he rejoiced with his comrades, acquiring amazing treasures.

Sometimes his friends died and he grieved.

All of the experiences led Touichirou to the warrior that he was now.

(But it's over now...)

He thought of the three boys who was journeying the Eastern Continent just like he and Aya back before they started their journey.

It was just a few months ago that Touichirou came back to his hometown he left behind after not being able to continue his journey.

His hometown warmly welcomed him back after his long absence, he went back to his parents' home though his father had passed away, and his younger brother who succeeded the family was delighted to see him.

He spent his time peacefully, his days of adventure seemed so unbelievable now.

While it felt boring, he also felt relieved that there were no longer any worries that he might die the next day.

He's still not used to it, but he would be. Before going on his journey, this was normal.

[Sorry to keep you waiting! Here's your hotdog and cola!]

While he was reminiscing, the demon waitress brought his order.

The waitress was wearing an otherworld uniform that he was not familiar with.

Before he went on his journey, the owner handled the restaurant all by himself, so she was probably hired after that.

(Indeed, some things do change after all.)

[Excuse me, young lady.]

He accepted that fact in his heart.

[I will deliver your takeaway later! Well then, please enjoy.]

The girl placed the dish that he ordered and went to attend other customers.

[Well then... let's eat.]

After watching her going away, Touichirou looked at the dish in front of him.

He ordered hotdog in this restaurant.

Young Touichirou and Aya couldn't help but loving it, this otherworld cuisine.



The hotdog placed on a white plate was just made and was still hot.

Pork intestine was sandwiched between baked bread made of wheat, it was seasoned with sour red sauce and hot yellow sauce.

...However, this food could only be eaten at the otherworld dining hall.

First, he grabbed the hotdog with his bare hands.

Just like onigiri, this food must be eaten with bare hands.



It shouldn't be eaten using chopsticks and Eastern Continent tableware.

(First...)

He lifted it to his mouth... and took a huge bite.

In that one bite, the hotdog had wonderful flavor.

The first thing he tasted was the baked wheat.

The outer part was crispy and fragrant while its inside was soft, sweet and fluffy.

(I thought that this was commonplace in the old days.)

In the mountains it was normal to eat rice, but bread was commonly eaten in the Eastern Continent where rice was not staple food.

...Although the taste was not as delicious as the freshly baked bread of this restaurant, Aya was quite disappointed.

The next one he tasted was the pork intestine sandwiched in between.

The freshly baked meat wrapping was pierced by his teeth... it had a crunchy texture.

Spreading in his mouth at that moment was the juice of the meat and fat, its exquisite taste further enhanced with the subtle spicity of the yellow sauce and the acidity of the red sauce.

Every time a large amount of sausage was chewed, its juice overflowed and dyed his tongue.

Both the intestine meat and the bread had excellent flavor.

However, the essence of hotdog's taste started from there.

(Muu... again, these Oranie and cabbage are delicious.)

They were placed under the sausage and could only be tasted after chewing.

The shredded Oranie was fried until its sweetness came out; it was different from the pungent taste of raw Oranie. The chopped cabbage was fresh and raw giving different

texture to the hotdog.

Hidden under the sausage, they couldn't be seen from above. But they inflated the taste of hotdog to make it even richer just like supporting a lord from the shadow.

(Umu, umu... this is the most delicious.)

Touichiro was greatly satisfied by the taste of hotdog that he had not eaten for a long time.

During his adventure, he went to various places and eaten different sorts of cuisine, but even after that, hotdog was still delicious.

(I want Aya to eat this too...)

To that taste, as Aya who was not next to him now... he thought of his beloved.

Although it's an inappropriate dream now.

Then, he chugged down the cold and sweet cola and stood up.

[Owner, it was delicious. Sorry to be a bother.]

[Yes, I have prepared your takeaway.]

[Umu. Sorry for your trouble.]

He gave the owner the money he owed and received the bag made of strange material.

Smelling the fragrant scent of hotdog drifting from inside the bag, his stomach grumbled even though he just finished eating. But he told himself to be patient.

[Well... I'll come again.]

[Yes. I'll be waiting.]

After he said his goodbye, Touichirou went out.

[Well, let's hurry up.]

He carefully slid down the tree and rushed to the town.

Touichirou had to hurry. He wanted to arrive before his takeout became cold.

[Just wait, Aya. I'll give you hotdogs until you're satisfied.]

He must take delicious hotdogs to his beloved wife who was taking care of their newborn baby and could not leave the house.

CHAPTER 37

SWEET POTATO TART



TN: Please keep in mind that the MC of this chapter comes from the Southern Continent. Just like Australia, its seasons are reversed so even though it was autumn in Japan, it's spring there. Btw, manager refers to the owner of Flying Puppy.

The manager of the “Flying Puppy” upstairs was preparing to bring his ordered items to the otherworld dining hall as soon as possible.

[Yo, there’s no problem today.]

[Ou.]

[A, good morning manager!]

The owner and Aletta greeted the manager who brought the cake wagon.

[Un, good morning. Here, I brought cake. To the usual person, it’s today’s cake.]

That’s right, the manager brought the “special cake of the day” in addition to the usual selection of pound cake and pudding.

[Waa... looks delicious.]

Aletta who saw it spontaneously sighed in admiration.

This was the first time Aletta saw a cake with vivid reddish purple colour and beautiful dark golden skin¹...



It looked so sweet and delicious.

[Ou, it's delicious. This is the first time I made it this year.]

The manager laughed at Aletta.

The Flying Puppy had “vegetable day” for a limited period of time every year from autumn until the year changed.

They were popular products that were seasonal unlike the regular stuff that were sold all-year round.

[This year... the sweet potato's season has arrived.]

As he said so, the manager picked up one of the tarts and handed it to Aletta.

[Here, it's a treat. Try it.]

[E!? Is that okay!?]

Aletta who received it unintentionally glanced to the owner.

[...It's just 1 piece.]

[Ye, yes... the, then...]

With the owner's permission, Aletta swallowed her spit and bit it.

(A... this...)

The sweetness that spread in her mouth had the softness peculiar to baked treats and it crumbled inside her mouth as if melting.

The sweetness of the sweet fruit of this shop was different from the sweetness of cream that could only be eaten here, a mysterious sweetness.

She swallowed it.

The feeling of the cake disappearing from her mouth was regretful... she finished eating it in 5 bites.

[...Is it good?]

[Yes!]

To the manager who was watching the situation, Aletta nodded without hesitation.

[Ou, I see! That's good.]

The manager laughed and said to the owner,

[Because I'm going to sell this starting today, so I asked. Certainly sweet potato tarts have fans, don't they?]

The manager had heard from the owner before.

There were regulars who only came when sweet potato tarts were sold every year.

[Ou. Somehow I felt like they will come today.]

The owner nodded back to the manager's confirmation.

Every year when autumn had arrived, the sweet potato tart regulars came to the restaurant.

It seemed that they would visit soon, his intuition that was polished through long-time restaurant management said so.

The snow that slightly remained on the shaded ground of the town had completely melted and there were signs that spring was arriving. That day was Satur's day.

[Umu. It should be around this time.]

The priest serving the "God of Gold" noticed it and nodded heavily.

[I'm going to practice a little. I'll be back by night time.]

Antonio easily told his wife and children about his errands and headed to training grounds.

[...Umu.]

The place he had continually used as his training grounds... it's impossible for humans to climb the cliff.

The cliff was so high that the top was covered with white clouds, and had been standing high as if resisting anything.

However, among the priests worshiping the "God of Gold", its height was not a problem to Antonio, which was particularly good.

[Well then... let's hurry.]

Muttering that word, Antonia prepared quickly.

He took off his simple jacket and wrapped it around his waist, exposing his well-trained tanned upper body.

After exposing it, Antonia clasped his hands together... and prayed.

The object of the prayer was the God of Gold who governed the sky and its thunder.

One of the six pillar gods with the figure of "dragon", which was the strongest creature in the world.

He continued to pray with concentration to borrow that power.

[Nuu!]

He activated it with a yell.

With the power of that prayer, gold dragon wings like the one that the god possessed

grew from his back.

[Umu...]

After slowly flexing his wings a few times, Antonio looked up and flew.

From his point of view, the ground grew distant and he went up the cliff face.

[...Nuu.]

When he flew close to the top, he reached his destination... he found a black door attached to a place where there was a slight scaffolding protruding from the cliff wall.

[Well, today is a good day...]

He shrugged on his jacket again and went through the door.

‘Chirinchirin’, the door opened.

[Owner, I’ll be in your care... nu?]

[A, welcome!]

While passing through the door and sensing the sign of Red Goddess² leaking out, he tilted his head seeing a young waitress that was not there last autumn.

[...Mu, young lady, what are you?]

[A, yes! I’m Aletta who is indebted to this restaurant! Pleased to meet you!]

The girl with goat horns hailed from the north and was a believer of the Demon God that was banished to the other side by the six pillar gods. She was not familiar with Antonio.

Apparently she was hired during the winter when Antonio didn’t visit, and she was trained to this restaurant’s method where even monsters were customers.

[Is that so. My name is Antonio. Nice to meet you... by the way, is sweet potato tarts available?]

After the introduction, Antonio asked for what he wanted.

[Yes! There is! It just came today! So your order is sweet potato tarts?]

To Aletta’s question after she answered with a smile, Antonio nodded satisfactorily.

[Umu. I wish to order sweet potatoes... 5 of it for the time being. Drink will be milk.]

[Yes, certainly! Please wait a moment!]

After receiving her order, Aletta retreated to the kitchen and Antonio went to sit on a vacant seat.

(...In the holy land of the Red Goddess, northern person, huh...)

While visiting the restaurant for the first time in half a year, he felt the anomaly of that place once again while looking at the restaurant's interior.

As usual, this restaurant was filled with signs of the Red Goddess who was one of the six pillars who governed fire.

When Antonio was still young and traveled around the continent, he went to an enshrined 500 years old temple of the Red Goddess that had such a strong aura it felt like a child's deception.³

(...So she still visits this place. The Red Goddess... seeking for food.)

If the Red Goddess was visiting this land, this would not be the goal that usually was considered.

A dish that attracted even God. It's shown that it exist in this restaurant.

(This is why northerners.)

Next, he observed the customers inside the restaurant.

Their cultures were different from Antonio's.

He remembered the northern people who visited the town 3 years ago.

A young man who said that he was a treasure hunter and was blown to that continent with the power of a ruins to fend off invaders a few years ago.

That man travelled around the continent to look for a way to return home said that there was a continent beyond the "Sea of the Blue God" to the north and many people lived there.

That's why this continent was called the "Southern Continent".

To the townspeople, his story was very mysterious but it was not surprising to Antonio now.

...He knew that the customers who visited the restaurant were “northern people” and convinced the townspeople to believe the man.

In this restaurant, the people of the continent where Antonio lived... they were hardly seen according to the young man’s words.

Apparently the door had not yet been found in the Southern Continent.

...Though the numbers had been increasing little by little lately.

[Ano, sorry to keep you waiting! Here’s your sweet potato tart and milk.]

While he was thinking such things, the waitress brought his order.

[Oo, it’s here...]

Hearing the waitress’ words, Antonio discontinued his thoughts.



Reddish purple sweet potatoes served in golden confectionery boat.

This was the gem that Antonio had loved for 6 years.

[Well then, please enjoy.]

Carefully thanking the waitress, Antonio started to eat his sweet potato tarts.

Using his hands, he lifted the tart by grasping its vessel... and bit on it.

Spreading inside the mouth was the sweet and nice Kumara's⁴ flavour.

Once it entered his mouth, the mashed sweet potato unraveled inside it.

(Aa, spring has come this year as well...)

To that taste, Antonio felt the arrival of spring.

Because Kumara was easy to grow and preserve, it was served at the dining table throughout the year, but Antonio did not like it that much.

Just boiling and roasting Kumara made it tasteless and dry inside his mouth.

However, this sweet potato was different.

This sweet potato sweetly melted inside his mouth and contained plenty moisture.

He could tell from the taste that the missing moisture was replaced by kneading milk and butter to it.

Also, it was a good idea to mash and shape it.

The sweet potatoes that were mashed once and kneaded again had fine texture; its sweetness did not deprive the water from the mouth.

(If these delicious sweet potatoes can be eaten at home, there's no way I would think that Kumara is not tasty.)

He thought so, but there's no way that such thing could be done.

In this holy place, Antonio ate one tart after another and washed the taste with the chilled milk.

He finished one tart in just two bites and he ate all of the tarts in one minute.

[Young lady. I would like to order a second serving.]

[Yes! Please wait a moment!]

After he finished the tarts, he asked for replacements and started eating again.

(Umu, as I thought, this is spring...)

After eating the sweet potato tarts until he's full, he felt the arrival of spring.

That was Antonio's custom for the last few years.

Since his belly was full, he paid the money and returned to the cliff top.

[Well then... fun'nu!]

He took off his jacket, grew his wings and flew.

[7 more days...]

After watching where the door was while hovering on the spot, Antonio flew away.

He would come again. He swore that inside his heart.

That was Antonio's secret spring enjoyment that he looked forward to every year.

For Antonio, spring had just begun.

-
1. For some reason the author wrote that the tart had dark gold colour sweet potato filling (which is understandable) but it has reddish purple crust (which is weird). I don't know whether the author made a mistake or not, but since I had never seen such a tart, I switched the colour around which makes more sense. -.-"
 2. This refers to the red queen a.k.a. beef stew.
 3. 子供だまし – I don't know what this means.
 4. クマーラ – Kumara, which what I think is the world's sweet potato.

CHAPTER 38

MUSHROOM SPAGHETTI



A small no-name town.

Alisa who ran a pharmacist on the outskirts of the forest found a black door as usual on the morning of the day that she was looking forward to for the last 7 days and laughed softly.

[Aa, that's good...]

The black door which appeared about 3 years ago at her medicinal herb garden near her forest house where difficult herbs were cultivated.

Alisa always looked forward to the door's appearance... the day she could visit the otherworld dining hall.

[I have to prepare for it...]

Alisa always prepared to go out before she went out.

Along with her homemade makeup, she wore a dress that she sewed herself just like how the old master of the pharmacy taught her back when she was just an orphan child.

She retrieved some money that she earned by selling medicines.

[Un. This is fine. I'm looking forward to it.]

She made her medicines in a happy mood while putting her thoughts on her day of enjoyment once in 7 days.

...Though thanks to a mistake, she had to throw away a defect medicine.

And when the sun reached its peak.

Alisa passed the door as usual.

'Chirinchirin', she closed the door while listening the sound... and heard the door opening again shortly afterwards.

[Yo! Hello, Alisa. How have you been?]

[Hello, Meimei. I'm doing fine.]

The girl that just came in... the black haired girl greeted with a smile to the tanned girl with large white goat horns.

[I see! That's good. Then, let's have a seat.]

[Un...]

Just as she thought, it was busy during lunch time. She called the waitress to give her order.

And both of them went to seat together on an appropriate table.

[Welcome.]

Approximately at the same time, the owner incidentally brought their water along with other customer's food.

[What would you like to order?]

Their orders were confirmed.

Since they first came to this restaurant for the last few years, their orders were almost always the same.

[Yes. I would like a wafu¹ mushroom spaghetti please.]

[Un. I would like creamy mushroom spaghetti! A, I would like to use chopsticks.]

[Okay.]

The owner nodded to the usual order and retreated to the kitchen.

[So, how was it?]

[N~? As usual. I always look after the sheep. How about you?]

[It's as usual for me too. Taking care of the plants and flowers, go to the forest for mushrooms and making medicines...right.

A, but the previous customer that came...]

Both of them started to chatter about their lives.

Since she lived on the outskirts, this was a valuable time for Alisa who lost her mentor due to an epidemic.

[N? What happened? You're looking at the waitress.]

[Un. Nothing.]

She answered with a smile to her friend.

Alisa thought that this restaurant was comfortable.

At least in her hometown, it's impossible for demons to work in a restaurant.

Her mentor, an expert pharmacist, was gentle enough to raise her as a human orphan with no blood ties.

To the extent that it was necessary for her to conceal her face with a deep hood and bandages to hide her eyes and scales, the demon had a small feeling of shame.

[Ou! Sake! I want 3 more bottles of shochuu!]



[I want more roast chicken and grilled onigiri!]





[Then I want to order more Scotch Eggs. Please.]



[More Carpaccio please!] [Make it smoked salmon next please!]



[Mu. Omurice. Second serving.]



There're ogres, lamia, sirens and lizardman behaving well inside the restaurant and eating vigorously. That's why she felt so about this place.

[Sorry to keep you waiting. Your orders of wafu mushroom spaghetti and creamy mushroom spaghetti.]

While thinking such things and having silly talks with Meimei, the owner came with

their orders.

[I've been waiting! Un, it looks delicious as always.]

[That's true. So, let's eat.]

The two of them began to eat their own food.

Alisa took a fork and started on her tea-coloured wafu mushroom spaghetti.



Meimei ate her creamy mushroom spaghetti using chopsticks.



(It's as amazing as ever. I couldn't eat while using such sticks.)

While watching Meimei who was deliciously eating creamy mushroom spaghetti with plenty knight sauce using chopsticks, Alisa ate her food.

The ingredients were smoked meat, dark green leafy vegetables (like Meimei's "otorigusa²" vegetable), mushrooms and Oranie that were fried until it became sweet.

Two kinds of mushrooms were used in her dish.

Both of those mushrooms provided different taste and texture to the spaghetti, Alisa liked them both.

(First... of course it's the mushrooms.)

She used her fork to scoop the noodles together with mushrooms.

The mushrooms that she selected were those that were sliced thinly and dyed brown by the wafu sauce, leaving behind the ones with black caps.

She carried the noodles with distinctive flavor of saltiness and butter to her mouth.

(Un. The main character of this dish is the mushroom after all.)

The two types of mushrooms were as delicious as ever.

It's wonderful to be able to include plenty of other ingredients and sauces while preserving the original taste of the mushrooms.

The taste of smoked meat with plenty fat, the umami of the meat and fat, and the sweetness of the sautéed Oranie.

The flavor and aroma of butter used to stir-fry the noodles.

And above it all, the wafu sauce used to season the dish.

Every time she chewed the mushrooms, its natural umami came out.

The owner said that they're called "shimeji" mushrooms and "mushroom³" mushrooms.

Though they were similar to the medicinal plants that Alisa was knowledgeable of,

both of them were different world mushrooms that she had never heard of and their flavours were very distinct.

She could enjoy these flavours together with otorigusa, but the mushrooms' tastes were exceptional.

Alisa silently ate her noodles with mushrooms, her smile naturally deepened.

[...Fuu.]

And then, after she ate to a certain extent, she placed down her fork.

At the same time, Meimei also stopped eating her creamy mushroom spaghetti.

[Well then, as usual...]

[Let's exchange.]

After drinking water to wash their mouths, the remaining mushroom spaghettis... they both exchanged their half-eaten food.

Both of them, women who lived alone, did not have much money in their pockets.

That's why, when Meimei proposed this way to enjoy both kinds of flavours at one time, Alisa immediately agreed.

(...Un. After all, it's hard to throw this away, right.)

She thought that while eating Meimei's creamy mushroom spaghetti.

The ingredients contained in creamy mushroom spaghetti were the same as those in wafu mushroom spaghetti.

Smoked meat, Oranie, otorigusa and two kinds of mushrooms.

However, the seasonings were definitely different.

The sauce used in creamy mushroom spaghetti was knight's sauce.

A rich sauce made of milk and butter, thickened with flour.

More than the wafu sauce, every time the strong buttery flavor and scent was carried to her mouth, the scent tickled her nose and her tongue encountered the sweetness of

the ingredients.

It was much more delicious than the knight's sauce made during various festival days that the town held.

At Alisa's hometown, she could eat it during festivals, but it seemed that it was not yet known at Meimei's hometown.

When she first entered the restaurant and ate it, Meimei laughed at her when she instinctively cried at the taste.

(It's interesting. We live at the same world and yet we eat different cuisine.)

Recalling what she heard so far, Alisha smiled.

Meimei said that there was a taste similar to wafu sauce back at her hometown.

It's a seasoning by fermenting salted fish, her hometown... it's something that appeared from Sea Country's market.

Alisa who lived at the Eastern Continent knew about knight's sauce, but she didn't know about wafu sauce.

Meimei who lived at the Western Continent knew what was close to wafu sauce, but she didn't know about knight's sauce.

That made Alisa felt the difference in their culture.

(It's fascinating. Truly...)

Meimei would have never been able to know about the forest at the outskirts of her hometown.

Being able to eat this, Alisa thanked God, and continued eating her creamy mushroom spaghetti.

Then, the both of them finished eating at around the same time, paid the bill and left the restaurant.

[See you later. In 7 days.]

[Yes, in 7 days.]

They were reluctant to part, but they promised while simultaneously went through the door.

Passing through the door, she entered her familiar herbal medicine garden.

Next to her... there was no one.

Meimei told her that her door... it seemed that it was found at the corner of her ranch where she raised her sheep.

[...Still, it's a little disappointing.]

She murmured as she watched the door disappeared after its role ended.

Someone she could spend time together once every 7 days when the door appeared... an important friend.

Regardless of demons or humans, Alisa returned to her usual herbal medicine preparation, it was regrettable that they could only meet once in 7 days.

...Still, she looked forward to the next enjoyable time eating delicious food with her friend.

TN: Why, author, why? First you write a sad chapter with sweet ending during hotdog. Now you write a fuwa-fuwa chapter with bitter-sweet ending!? I'm not prepared for the onslaught of feels. ToT

1. Wafu pasta – Japanese style Italian pasta that features ingredients typically eaten with white rice that are instead mixed with spaghetti noodles.
2. オートリグサ – I still don't know what vegetable this is. Though I suspect its spinach since it's the only vegetable that suits the description and fits with the dishes that I could think of.
3. Here the author used マッシュルーム which was read as masshurūmu hence

the double mushrooms. Who knows what kind of mushroom this is. Maybe something like this?



CHAPTER 39

SEAFOOD PILAF



Alfred, a hired employee of the Empire, was accompanying a beautiful girl and walking around the city center of the Capital.

[...Is it true?]

His master this time... a young daughter of a noble family, Aisha, with loose, undulating black hair and lightly tanned skin from the Sand Country of the far away West Continent, asked him again.

[Ee. It's true.]

Alfred nodded to her question.

Alfred had a secret plan.

"I don't want to be a constant burden of people talking in the Empire, I want to return to the Sand Country, I would be delighted to have you as my husband."

The Capital City of the Empire was a young capital city.

It was only 50 years since the Capital began to flourish ever since the wise emperor Wilhelm made the country to be called “Empire”.

There used to a country with the same name as the Empire.

It seemed that it was a prospering country, although it was not the leading major powers of the Eastern Continent like the Principality which hailed from the Old Kingdom and was the first country for humans.

But a country with the same name as the Empire... the old Empire faded away quite easily. Their location and luck were too bad.

During the last years of the Evil God War, after many battles between humans and demons, the vicinity of the former Empire’s Capital became the forefront of the battlefield.

The battle was terrible, it was said that many cities and villages were destroyed and its citizens were killed.

And one time, the leader of the demon tribe “the Demon King” who possessed the most power among all demons wanted a human city... he rallied his whole army and attacked the former Capital.

In any case, the opponent was a demon during the age of Evil God War, that demon was a monster capable of decimating an army.

The old Capital capitulated, only two of the royal family had survived, the princess who had the excessive fortune to be saved by the four heroes and her son.

The princess who survived then became Emperor Mother Adelheid and her son was named Wilhelm who later became the wise emperor, and the history of the Empire began there.

The Empire was a country where people lived poorly for a long time until Wilhelm discovered the Baron’s fruit and spread its cultivation.

Therefore, the rich people were still few and there were only a few high-end shops.

In addition, the Capital was located in the middle of the Eastern Continent and the ocean was far away.

And so...

[To be honest I can't believe it. I don't know that there's a restaurant serving rice dishes using seafood.]

It was a dish that Aisha extremely wanted.

Aisha was born in the Sand Country of the Western Continent.

There, rice was commonly eaten as a staple food and seafood was familiar at the port towns of Sand Country.

Not only were they at the Eastern Continent, they were at the inland Capital.

For the food that Aisha wanted, not even gold was enough to obtain it except by being helped by a magician.

Alfred said that he knew where they could eat the dish, but Aisha was skeptical.

[There is no shop in the vicinity. Really...]

Besides, the location also said that there's something fishy about Alfred's story.

Yes, they were now walking around the corner where foreign nobles were living.

It was a place where there were no shops as it was usual for the merchants to carry their merchandise straight to the aristocracy.

Due to that common sense, there was no way that there's a restaurant.

[That's right. I understand that. Until recently that is.]

However, Alfred reacted to Aisha's retort with a wry smile.

It was "7 days ago", when he encountered a Halfling that he had never seen around there. Driven by his curiosity, he decided to ask him.

The only "restaurant" that appeared in the Capital was in this area.

[Yes, we've arrived.]

Alfred pointed to a narrow alley between nobles' mansions.

[...Why is the door at that place?]

Aisha tilted her head seeing the door so close to the narrow alley where people wouldn't even notice.

[Eeto, that's the way it is. That door.]

When he replied to Aisha, he smiled wryly seeing the same expression that he had when the Halfling told him the same thing.

[That place, it appears only once every 7 days, a different world restaurant... the doorway that leads to the otherworld dining hall.]

He remembered the delicious dish he ate that Aisha craved.

'Chirinchirin', the door opened.

[Welcome to Nekoya Western Restaurant!]

Reflexively looking to the door, a waitress wearing a short skirt said to those two.

[...A demon waitress? This restaurant.]

Seeing the small horns growing from her temple, Aisha asked Alfred.

There were many demons in the Capital, she saw many of them before, but it was unlikely that one worked at a place that catered to nobles.

[Looks like it. But you shouldn't be surprised by this much.

There's none currently, but there are monster customers as well.]

Alfred said that as if to admonish Aisha.

[Monsters!? You must be joking...]

Before he could reply, the door opened.

[Mu. You're in the way. Move aside.]

[Hii!?!]

Aisha unexpectedly screamed when she looked backwards and saw a lizardman standing behind her... his bulging muscles shifted.

[So, sorry. We'll step aside now.]

[Mu.]

Alfred hurriedly pulled away the stiff Aisha, the lizardman nodded and ordered after seating on an appropriate seat.

The waitress was accustomed to it and took his order with a smile.

[Wha, wha, wha, wha, what is this restaurant, isn't it strange!?!]

Due to the sudden events, Aisha protested to Alfred with teary eyes.

[Certainly, they were not there when I last came because it's late afternoon at that time, but this is a bit...]

Alfred smiled wryly, and was surprised when he saw the door opened and a horde of faeries came in.

The story that he heard when he first came turned out to be the truth.

Sometimes people could be led by Halflings who loved this kind of jokes.

[Let's sit down for now... are you okay with us sitting here?]

Looking inside the restaurant, it was beautiful as always, though he felt like he had seen the girl with similar air as Aisha in the Empire before. She was talking excitedly with a noblewoman of the Sand Country sitting beside her table while a man with similar features to the noblewoman wasn't doing anything though he seemed to be listening to their conversation.

Alfred saw an empty table next to them and asked the nobleman.

[...Aa, do as you like.]

He had lightly tanned skin, glossy black hair that seemed well taken care of, and wearing exotic clothes that were embroidered with golden threads. The man that seemed to be a nobleman of the Sand Country nodded disinterestedly.

[Is that so. Thank you very much... well then, ojou-sama, this way.]

Luckily Alfred got his permission and urged Aisha to seat there.

[...Really, is this okay? This restaurant?]

Already feeling worn-out due to numerous surprises, Aisha asked Alfred.

Seeing as there were "siblings" coming from Sand Country that she was vaguely

familiar with seating next to them, he used that coincidence to reassure her.

[Excuse me, I would like to order?]

Confirmed that Aisha had seated, Alfred called the waitress to order.

[Yes! Well, what would you like to order?]

[Etto, 2 seafood pilafs please. And kaffa... ah wrong, coffee for after the meal.]

Quickly ordering... the same food that he ate last time, he asked for the “rice dish using seafood” that Aisha wanted.

[Yes! Thank you very much. Please wait for a moment.]

The waitress nodded and retreated to inform the owner as soon as possible.

After that.

[Thank you for waiting. Here're your seafood pilafs.]

After receiving the order at the kitchen, a middle-aged man who should be the owner placed the plates in front of both of them.



Rounded, red peeled Schripe, clear white rice mixed with chopped vegetables, and white peeled shellfish that had grid-like cuts.

The smell of butter tickled Aisha's nose and she gulped her saliva.

[Please enjoy your meal.]

The owner retreated to the back after saying that.

And only the seafood pilaf with buttery fragrance was left before them.

[...It looks pretty good.]

After swallowing her spit, Aisha said that with a straight face though she inwardly blushed when her stomach growled.

[Well, let's enjoy it before it gets cold.]

Ignore that sound magnificently, Alfred urged Aisha.

[I, I know!]

Even though she unintentionally raised her voice, she picked up a silver spoon.

She scooped up the rice and ingredients... to her mouth.

(A, so delicious...)

The moment she ate the spoonful, to that desired taste, tears pricked the corners of her eyes due to the food that was even more delicious than she thought.

Soft, freshly cooked rice, wrapped by the butter's scent.

Spices that were valuable in the Empire were used as seasonings, and when the umami of the seafood was soaked up by her tongue, the flavours unraveled in her mouth.

It seemed that the rice's quality was excellent; its flavor came out whenever she thoroughly chewed her food.

The ingredients' flavours were also top quality.

She couldn't think that these were transported from the sea. They were so fresh that there was no bad smell.

Small Schripes that were chewy and Clarco¹ that were carved with latticed cuts to make it easier to eat.

The unknown shellfish contained plenty of seafood juice.

Bright vivid orange, yellow and green vegetables were finely minced and mixed with the rice, making an excellent combination.

And the water that oozed out from the vegetables combined with the seafood juice to make western sauce, raising the overall taste of the rice dish.

Before she realized it, she finished the seafood pilaf.

Her stomach felt satisfied.

With the warmth of the seafood pilaf warming her belly, Aisha sighed.

[How was it, ojou-sama? Do you like it?]

[Well... so-so, I guess.]

Seeing Alfred smiling happily, Aisha smoothed her expression.

...With a grain of rice on her face near her mouth.

[That's good. I'm glad that you're pleased with it.]

After confirming that his master was satisfied, Alfred started on his seafood pilaf.

It was delicious. Just like the previous time he ate it.

(I'm glad that ojou-sama gets to eat this too...)

Apparently this dish was also very delicious to a foreign noble.

For a girl who normally had a small appetite, she cleared her plate with surprising speed.

(...Un?)

When he was eating, he noticed.

Aisha was staring at the Alfred's pilaf.

[...Ano, excuse me. Please give another serving of the same dish.]

[Yes, thank you very much.]

He called the waitress and asked for additional order.

[...!? I, I don't need another serving! 1 serving is enough!]

Aisha refuted half-heartedly.

[Ee. I know. But since I'm a man, one serving is not enough.

...But since another serving is too much for me to finish, will ojou-sama help me finish it?]

Alfred pleasantly suggested to the ojou-sama.

[...! It, it can't be helped! Understand that!]

Aisha nodded while smiling enthusiastically.

(Yareyare. What a troublesome master... still, she has a pretty cute side.)

Smiling wryly at Aisha, Alfred continued to eat his pilaf.

At the moment they stepped outside, the door vanished.

[Really, what a strange restaurant.]

[Maa, it's a different world after all.]

While exchanging such conversation, they left the location.

[Will you come with me again next time, ojou-sama?]

While walking, he made that proposal.

[That's fine. Maa... if it's once in 3 days, I wouldn't mind.]

Beside him, Aisha looked happy though she pretended to be calm.

[No, that restaurant only appears once in 7 days...]

[Ee!? Is that so!?]

Hearing that, Aisha's face drooped in sadness.

(Un. Let's go again 7 days later.)

Alfred secretly made the next schedule.

CHAPTER 40

KATSUDON



The first day of battle to fight for their lives, literally.

[Maa, don't worry. I got you a special permission. You can use the weapon you used up until now.]

The elderly man with missing eye and chipped tooth... a survivor of the Evil God War, Lionel's manager narrowed his eye while saying that.

[Iyaa, the current Maou-sama sure is kind. You were bought at 10,000 gold coins. You will be released if you can pay it back.

Besides, when it comes to newcomers, the prize money is also big. If you win a spectacular battle, you can be rewarded 100 gold coins a day.

I'm really jealous.]

(Well said. Those words, he doesn't even have a speck of belief that I can survive today.)

Looking at himself, he pitied himself for death seemed to be looming over him, and Lionel became irritated.

[Jaa, good luck. The match is at noon... if possible, try not to die.]

Only then, the old man left the waiting room and Lionel was left alone inside.

——— How did this happen?

When the elderly manager left, with a faint scent of blood drifting in the dim and gloomy room while the metal collar around his neck made him felt unpleasant, Lionel asked that question to himself again and again.

Just half a month ago, Lionel was living a great life.

He enjoyed living like the demons of the good old days.

But now here he was in this dark room, with a cursed collar to prevent escape around his neck and waiting for the fate of death.

If Lionel was born 100 years, no, 50 years earlier, he who was born with strong blessing from the Demon God could even become one of the generals of the “Demon King”.

His whole body was covered with steel-like muscles and hard bristles, a lion’s face with its regal appearance.

His roars had enough power to even kill small animals; his strength was great enough to throw boulders larger than him.

His weapon was a custom made sword manufactured by a blacksmith; it was huge, durable and had blunt edges, if Lionel swung it, the weapon could even bisect a steel-armored knight in half.

Lionel was a man born to fight.

Precisely because he was such a man, Lionel threw himself into battles.

As a mercenary, he could even turn the tides of a conflict.

Without war occurring, he wielded his sword intently against bandits who feared their fated death fighting against him.

He was fawned by many female demons, day-by-day many demons and humans admired Lionel's strength.

——— Such days continued, until one day it ended.

[Hehe... what do you think? My prided one-hit strike? You can't move, right?

Even if I look like this, I have confidence in my sword. Both my arm sword and lower sword.]

In a beautiful bell-like voice, a vulgar language was spat at Lionel who fell down to the ground.

He did not know the reason.

Indeed he could not land even a single blow, but on the contrary a thin needle-like sword landed only one attack.

With just that, Lionel fell down to the ground, his body from neck to toe was paralyzed.

[Don't worry, you won't die. You'll be back to normal in 3 days. The same for your subordinates too.

...I stabbed it that way.]

At the former battlefield where no one moved, he talked to Lionel endlessly.

[It's a contract with my employer. The agreement is 3% of the money obtained by selling you and your belongings.

If you die, the amount will be reduced by half. That's why it's unlucky to do so.]

Lionel raised his movable head and asked him.

...A half-elf in form only, a monster.

[Still, you are born in the correct era. Your power is just like what the rumors said.

If you were born 50 years earlier you could even become the demon king. Though Yomi would kill you.]

His appearance was a male teenager still too young to be called an adult, with well-rounded appearance distinct from humans, and it was like a young girl that had not blossomed into a woman yet.

And the expression of his eyes was a mixture of children's cruelty and the ruthlessness of a veteran.

[You should brag about it later, the fact that "I survived fighting against that Alexander long ago."

...While you're still alive, I want you to know my name before you die.]

Before, he went around killing demons in various places, and finally got to witness the monster who claimed to be one of the four heroes that killed the Evil God, who urged the mules that were stunned seeing the one-sided fight to carry Lionel and his subordinates.

[Mo, monster...]

Though his voice managed to squeeze out from his throat, Lionel was terrified.

Ever since he was born, this was the first time he felt fear.

To spend more than 100 years on the battlefield with that unique sword, his existence was more terrifying than anything.

[——— Me? A monster?]

To those words, that monster laughed lightly and said.

[I don't think I can be called a monster. I'm not as strong as Yomi after all.]

After that, he went to Lionel's treasury where he stashed all of his accumulated treasures while Lionel was loaded into a horse-drawn carriage by several people.

From that point, Lionel's life had drastically changed.

At the Demon Capital, Lionel was sold as a slave at a tremendous price of 10,000 gold

coins.

The one who bought Lionel was a family of the Demon King that ruled the only demonic city in the world.

Rather than the position won by force, they were descendants of the Demon King who managed to escape the massacre by the 4 heroes back during the war, they didn't have battle experience.

After the war, for the young new country to catch up... high-ranking aristocrats had chosen to secure the land for the demon tribe to live under the Empire.

Those who chose to lead the country with law and wisdom, not power, decided to use Lionel as an "example" to those who committed treacherous acts in their territories.

It was the remnant of the era when demons valued power the most, now fighting slaves were sold to the arena where people could enjoy bloody entertainment.

Of course, there was a way for Lionel to survive.

There was no human or demon who could win against Lionel.

The problem was beyond there however.

(A Manticore, huh...)

The opponent had magical power on par with the Demon King, part of the fighting force during the war when the demons were using special magic...

A high ranking monster with the ability to destroy an adventurer party or a small country's knight group.

It was nearly impossible for Lionel to defeat it alone even in normal condition.

In addition...

(... Winning, huh? It's impossible for me to win against that thing.)

The cause of that thought... Lionel's mouth could once again taste the bitterness of absolute defeat.

Once, Lionel believed that he was strong. Even if the opponent was the 4 heroes that killed the Demon King, they couldn't win against him.

But now... he couldn't believe so.

He clasped his hands. To lose, to abandon the fear of dying.

(...Tch. I have to go...)

He stood up, lifting his sword with the face of a sinner facing his execution.

[...What is that?]

There was a hidden door of human height.

In a crude stone room, there was an out-of-place well-made black wooden door.

The cat picture painted on the door stared at Lionel.

[Why is there such a door in this place?]

Lionel looked behind him... he saw the sturdy iron door that the old man used.

In order to prevent fighting slaves like Lionel from escaping, the walls of the stadium were constructed with stone while all the doors were made from steel.

Obviously, such a door was abnormal.

[...Oh well. I won't live much longer.]

With a sigh, Lionel turned the brass handle of the door.

'Chirinchirin', the unlocked door opened.

[Ou. Welcome...]

He entered a bright room and Lionel unexpectedly closed his eyes.

[That's rare. There're 2 new customers coming today.]

Hearing that voice, he opened his eyes.

[Oi, old man, what kind of place is this?]

Standing before him was a human.

Short and trimmed hair with neat beard, but his body was built for his age.

[Why? This time's guest sure has an extreme greeting.]

To Lionel's words, the man laughed without minding his appearance.

[This is the Western Restaurant Nekoya. From your perspective, you're currently in a different world.]

As usual, the owner told him the identity of the restaurant.

[...A restaurant?]

Lionel looked inside the restaurant, disbelieving that there was such a place inside the stadium.

The restaurant was deserted.

What he was doing now was eating some brown food cooked by the middle-aged man with high speed while drinking water from a glass cup.

[...It doesn't seem to be popular.]

[Isn't that true.]

Lionel's frank manner of speaking didn't perturb the owner, he just laughed.

[Ma, it doesn't seem that there're a lot of entrances on the other side.]

[Entrance? ...That door.]

He looked back to the door where he came from.

If he looked closely to the top of the black door, there was a cat-shaped bell attached to the door.

Perhaps it was the one that connected this restaurant to the stadium.

[So, what do you think? What would you like to eat? If you can't pay the money, I can just put it on your tab.]

The owner asked him in a friendly manner.

[I see... I understand. Feed me something. I don't have any money though.]

Lionel decided to take the owner's favour.

Thinking about it, he hadn't eaten anything yet since he was defeated, so he remembered that he was currently hungry.

[So, what's delicious in this restaurant?]

It might be his last meal. He would like to eat at least a decent food. It would be perfect if there's meat.

He asked while thinking such.

[Oh yeah, every food here is delicious.

...If there's anything you want to eat, don't hesitate to say something. It's a little difficult to explain the food here to you.]

The owner said with a smile.

[...I see.]

To those words, Lionel saw other customers eating their food at their tables with great speed.

[Owner, give me another plate of curry rice!]

The man who emptied the plate at astounding rate called for a dish named "curry rice".

Seeing the white mound with brown stuff poured over it, Lionel had no clue what kind of dish that was.

[Okay, wait a moment! I'll start cooking after I finish taking this person's order.]

Even though he's a demon, the owner showed no signs of fear and turned back facing Lionel.

He may be a human, but he's not a bad person.

While thinking so, Lionel told the owner what he wanted to eat.

[For the time being, I want meat... that and,]

He swallowed his spit and said his idea.

[Something that can help me win my battle... no, never mind.]

Withdrawing his timid words that managed to leak out, he withdrew his order.

[Ou, leave it to me.]

However, the owner nodded while lightly laughing.

[...You're serious?]

[Technically, it's quite far-fetched.]

Lionel showed a surprised face, but the owner replied nonchalantly.

[Then wait for a minute. I'll make it after I serve the curry.]

Those words raised his spirit from the bottom of his heart.

[...What is this restaurant?]

Later, Lionel left after stuffing his face with food.

After a while.

Finally, the owner placed the plate of finished food on the tray and brought it over.

[Okay, it's finished.]

On the tray were brown soup, slices of yellow vegetable placed on a small brown plate, and a large blue and white striped pottery bowl.

He did not know what's inside the bowl as it was closed with a lid with the same pattern.

[...This is?]

[Ou, it's Katsudon.]

To Lionel's question, a name of a foreign food was his answer.

[Katsudon?]

[Yep, Katsudon.]

When the owner once again said the name of the food, he explained the meaning.

[In my country, the word "Katsu"... it means "victory". This food is full of nutritious meat and eggs. I guess this is a fitting food for a man before a battle.]

The owner gently lifted the lid.

[Ou...]

Lionel unintentionally leaked his voice smelling the fragrant sweet scent.

After the lid was taken off, a tantalizing vivid brown food could be seen with the yolk and the white of eggs intertwined together.



His stomach which was empty ever since he was made into a slave roared loudly.

[Well, enjoy.]

With that said, the owner collected empty plates from other tables and retreated to the kitchen.

[...Yosh, let's eat.]

Swallowing his spit, Lionel grabbed a fork.

[First off... the meat.]

Lionel's fork gently pierced the meat and he got excited.

The smell of "Katsudon" which was already fragrant became even stronger when he brought the food closer to his nose.

[Yosh...]

He carried the meat with eggs to his mouth... and unintentionally roared to the taste.

It was delicious. More than anything he had ever eaten.

The first thing he tasted was the sweet taste of Oranie beneath the meat, which he didn't notice until he picked up the meat that was seasoned with unknown sauce.

It mixed with the meat juice that seeped out of meat's coating and spread sweetly inside his mouth.

The taste of the meat was delicious.

From the meat's texture when he chewed eat and its juice leaking out inside his mouth, it seemed that high-quality pork was used. The meat slowly unraveled inside his mouth.

Overflowing in his mouth, the combination of sauce and meat fat.

When combined with the coating, it was irresistible.

[Un? Underneath...]

Lionel who was greatly urged by the taste proceeded to pierce another cut when he noticed that there was something beneath the meat.

[What is this?]

It was something the Lionel had never seen before.

They were small grains which were originally white, dyed light brown by the sauce.

Apparently most of the bowl was packed with it and placed underneath the meat.

[That's right, the old man said something like this... cooked rice wasn't it.]

He scooped it with his fork, remembering the owner's words.

The rice showed a mixed appearance of white and brown, illuminated by magic light of another world that did not use fire.

He carried it to his mouth.

(I see... it's so-so.)

While chewing it, he judged the taste.

Apparently it had little to no taste.

While it was delicious since it absorbed the meat sauce... it was unsatisfactory.

(Maybe it's there just for padding? ...Wait.)

Suddenly, he noticed it when he observed the other customer.

The middle aged man that was eating “curry rice” with great speed.



Although his clothing looked as if it was damaged by a storm, but from its original tailoring it seemed expensive...

Just by looking at his shaped body, he could see that he had considerable skills in combat.

The curry rice that he was eating also had cooked rice.

The man seemed to be eating it deliciously by scooping it to his mouth along with the sauce.

Looking at it, Lionel decided to follow the man's example.

The meat on top and the rice underneath.

He scooped both at the same time... and threw them to his mouth.

[Ooooo!]

He roared unexpectedly again this time.

It was a success. By eating both the meat and the rice at the same time created a great combination.

(No, this is the original form of this dish!)

He did not notice it when he first ate, but the meat alone had a strong taste.

On the contrary, the rice had little taste.

And when he ate both of the meat and rice at the same time, this dish showed its best flavor.

Lionel no longer hesitated.

Even if it was rude, he lifted the bowl near his mouth.

And he used his fork to shovel the food to his mouth.

(Delicioussssss!)

He shoveled the food to his mouth in raging speed.

It was regrettable that he had to swallow in between of chewing the food in his mouth.

The Katsudon was warm and sweet, it filled his stomach comfortably.

At that moment in his head, he did not think of his misfortune and future battle.

He was delighted by the delicacy and taste of Katsudon.

This was a very happy time for him.

But the end came for everything.

[...Fuu.]

After he ate the salty vegetables and drank the soup, Lionel sighed.

[It's not enough.]

Yes, just one bowl of Katsudon was not enough for a giant like Lionel.

Not even a single grain of rice remained inside the empty bowl.

The hunger was not as bad as before... but it was still unsatisfactory.

[Kuso! I wish I have money...]

Lionel murmured regrettably.

When he was made a fighting slave, all of his belongings were confiscated, leaving no money behind for Lionel, and his future prospect seemed bleak.

He could not enjoy this wonderful taste anymore.

...Lionel could probably threaten the owner to make him additional food, but he couldn't afford to do so.

He may be a human, but even though Lionel was a fearsome demon, that old man treated him as a customer without being afraid of him.

[There's no helping it...]

He was about to stand when it happened.

[Here's another serving of Katsudon. Thank you for waiting.]

The same rice bowl was placed in front of him.

[...I thought that just one bowl is not enough for you.

If you don't want it, I'll just eat it for lunch. What will you do?]

[Of course I want to eat it!]

He nodded his confirmation to the owner and sat firmly.

[Ou. Do you want another bowl? You could pay me back later when you have money.]

[...Of course! Thank you!]

While graciously appreciating the owner's favour, he picked up his fork again.

And on that day, Lionel finished five bowls of Katsudon.

He left the restaurant, once again entering the room where the scent of blood lingered.

[Fuu... I've been cared considerably.]

He patted his belly that was packed full with Katsudon.

It was the first satisfactory meal in a while. And it was more delicious than anything he had ever eaten.

[Well, I have to go... I have to earn the money to pay for Katsudon after all.]

He felt content with his situation and exited the room triumphantly.

Before he knew it, the fear of losing left him.

Even though his opponent was a Manticore, he would crush it. That's it.

Together with that simple conclusion... he entered the arena.

There was no hesitancy in his footsteps. Lionel no longer believed that he would be defeated, not even a bit.

...Lionel did not know yet.

He slaughtered the Manticore in just 3 blows and won 10,000 gold coins in just one year; it was the spectacular debut battle of the gladiator who reigned as the strongest warrior in the arena for over 20 years as the "Lion King".

TN: Seeing this chapter made me want to eat both curry rice and Katsudon. While pondering which to choose, I decided to just combine both of them and ate Katsu curry! The meat was chicken though, regrettably. It would be perfect if it's pork. orz





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